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The ANTIOCH REVIEW

> "Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world?"
>
> —ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

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The ANTIOCH REVIEW

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EDITORIAL

The people's revolution is on the march, and the devil and all his angels cannot prevail against it.—Henry A. Wallace.

Some weeks ago, President Roosevelt suggested that World War II inadequately characterized the crusade in which we are now engaged and he called for the coinage of a new phrase—a phrase which would more accurately indicate the purposes for which we are fighting. Mr. Wallace has now produced that phrase: the people's revolution. In one of the great speeches of the war, delivered in New York City before the Free World Association, the Vice-President identified our war aims with the interests of the common man. "Some have spoken of the 'American Century,'" he said. "I say that the century on which we are entering —the century which will come out of this war—can be and must be the century of the common man." With these simple words, the psychological offensive passed to the United Nations.

From the beginning of the war, the psychological advantage had rested with the Axis powers. This was not due primarily to the fact that they had developed their propaganda services to a higher point than those of the United Nations, nor even to the fact that they consistently held the military offensive. What was even more important was that they knew concretely what they were fighting for. No one in Germany, Italy, or Japan was uncertain as to the war aims of his government; and there were few who doubted that their own lives would be better if those aims were realized.

In contrast, there has been the utmost uncertainty about war aims among the peoples of the United Nations. Forced on the defensive from the very beginning, we have been largely occupied with negative considerations. We have known what we were fighting against, but less clearly what we are fighting for. We have known that our own lives will be worsened if we lose, but we have not known that they will be bettered if we win. The result has been an absence of enthusiasm for the war and widespread pessimism concerning the peace.

Not all of this has been dispelled by Mr. Wallace's speech. After all, he was speaking as an individual and it is well known that there has been an undercover struggle within the government itself over our war and postwar objectives. Mr. Sumner Welles' Memorial Day address outlined a set of considerably more limited objectives than those envisaged by Mr. Wallace—although he, too, pledged an end to imperialism—and the nearsightedness of congressional vision in these respects is a major cause of concern. But when all of this has been said, the fact remains that the air has been appreciably cleared. Mr. Wallace has sketched a vision of the future and has drawn an interpretation of the present to which men of good will everywhere can rally. He has taken the first step toward making this a real people's war—without which we could never have hoped to win—and toward the construction of a people's peace.

Mr. Wallace identifies the present war with one hundred and fifty years of revolutionary struggle. It is the most recent act in a long-drawn-out people's revolution. The American and French revolutions were a part of that struggle, as were the Latin-American revolutions of the Bolivarian era, the German Revolution of 1848, and the Russian Revolution of 1918. Now the "people are on the march toward even fuller freedom than the most fortunate peoples of the earth have hitherto enjoyed." They are on the march toward freedom from want. They are fighting "to make sure that everybody in the world has the privilege of drinking a quart of milk a day." They are headed for the century of the common man. It is America's task to help the common people on their way.

This is a statement of war aims to stir the hearts of men, to raise them to new levels of achievement, and to bring hope back into the world. But we should be sure that we know what the people's revolution means, what our enlistment in its behalf will mean. On this score, Mr. Wallace was not specific. Let us see what it means to choose the cause of the people:

It means, first of all, that we are not fighting to restore the social, or economic, or political systems which we knew before the war. A social system in which men and women are discriminated against on the basis of class, or creed, or color—in which opportunities for Negro and white are unequal, or for poor and rich—will not be tolerated in the century of the common man. We are not fighting for that social system, and we had best begin to discard it today.

We aren't fighting for the economic system we used to have, either—although the National Association of Manufacturers may not have heard about the people's revolution. We aren't fighting for a system of vested chaos in which the people went hungry when there was bread. We aren't fighting for a system which could not provide security for the average man, which couldn't solve unemployment, and which, without extensive state intervention, couldn't produce for victory. That isn't what this war is about.

We aren't fighting for the political system we had before the war: for the preservation of the poll tax, or the terrorization of voters by city machines, or politics with other people's misery. We aren't fighting to restore that either, in the century of the common man.

What we are fighting for is simple. We are fighting for equal opportunity for all, both in this country and throughout the world. We are fighting for an economic system which is in harmony with modern technology and which will produce for the common man, not restrict production for the stockholder. We are fighting for a political system which will reflect the wants and needs of the common man everywhere in the world, not those of a privileged few. We are fighting for a world in which ordinary men and women can live in peace and security and in which the tests of public policy will be the welfare of the greatest number. These are simple things we are fighting for, but if we achieve them, the people's revolution will have succeeded after one hundred and fifty years of struggle.

CONTROLLERS OF ENGLAND

A Lesson for America

By ERNEST DALE

When war broke out in September, 1939, the fate of England and her allies depended on the greatest possible output of war materials. To that end England's industry had to be controlled. Materials, men, and machines had to be allocated in accordance with the principle of maximum production rather than with the forces of free competition, vested interests, or chance. The output of any one industry or any one firm within that industry had to be limited or altogether prohibited rather than determined by the preferences, habits, and tastes of individuals. Prices and profits had to be fixed rather than decided by supply and demand. These are the functions of controllers and it is clear that in the nature of the case the men delegated to exercise these functions would wield great power and influence. Indeed their actions at home would decide the course of battles abroad. Hence it is of importance to know on what basis they were appointed, who they were, and what they have done.[1]

It was Mr. Neville Chamberlain, the Prime Minister, who determined the principles of control and who was responsible for the appointments made. His principles were simple. His mind had been made up long before the war. He was to be controller-in-chief and he would select the controllers for the various raw materials and finished products from the industry which they were to control. The chief argument in favor of this practice was of course that it would make use of the fullest and most expert knowledge. "The idea that we cannot have a controller who is interested in a trade," said Mr. Chamberlain in February, 1940, "seems to leave out of account the fact that it is just those who have been in a trade who are most fitted to be controllers, because of their knowledge of the trade." Thus the cotton controller was a cotton man, the wool controller a wool man, the silk controller a silk man, the tin controller a tin man, and the controllers of imported goods were import merchants who handled that particular line. Out of twenty-nine major industries in December, 1939, twenty-one were controlled by men coming from the trade which they were going to administer.

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[1] I have to acknowledge the pioneer work that has been done in this field by Mr. G. D. N. Worswick of Oxford University, the London *Economist* and the *New Statesman and Nation*.

Mr. Chamberlain claimed in February, 1940, that these controllers had achieved "prodigious results." But against this the London *Economist* wrote in a prophetic passage: "The noble army of controllers was recruited from organized industry. The rings, far from being tolerated, became endowed with all the power of the State . . . the result has been a startling inadequacy of production." The military events of the following months made it abundantly clear who was right.

The controllers of the Chamberlain era probably had the best intentions. They certainly did not take advantage of their position by way of amassing large fortunes. But they failed to deliver the goods. One reason for this failure was the conflict between the self-interest of the controllers and the public good. There were many aspects to this important conflict, the most striking being perhaps the fear of excess capacity. Many industries had thrived for a long time by restricting output. Their success in making money had come from the creation of scarcity. Now they were unable or unwilling to forget their old habits. With one eye on the losses which they had been suffering from over-capacity after the last war, they were now looking to the end of this war, fearing an even worse repetition of their experiences. The state had helped them to establish their monopolies, it had subsidized and enforced them; now they were firmly entrenched and were looking forward to another period of even higher profits and lower turnovers. In the past the high costs of their export goods and the consequent decline of exports had not harmed the country greatly, for the terms of trade had been in favor of England throughout the '30's and there were large overseas investments to draw on for an adverse balance of trade. Hence they were reluctant—to put it mildly—to expand their capacity to produce.

Take, for example, the steel industry. The controller was the chairman of Baldwin's, one of the largest iron and steel companies in the country. His superior was the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Supply, and the Minister himself was a chairman of the British Iron and Steel

Federation. This control failed to create sufficient additional producing capacity. It even failed sufficiently to utilize existing capacity. It failed to take full command of the available materials, labor, machinery, and tools, with the result that one firm had the materials but not the labor to make them into munitions, whereas another had the labor but lacked the necessary tools and materials. Hence the delays and disturbances which were already caused through the absence of proper planning were now even increased. The lack of control over materials led to a scramble for them. After some time a system of priorities was instituted with the idea of preventing the use of vital materials in less important sections of the industry. But it broke down, because it failed to stimulate the more important sections. Altogether there was much duplication of effort and in the end the output obtained often did not fit the requirements of the Services.

Take machine tools. Here again there was no adequate survey of the resources available. Nothing was done to override the vested rights and the holders of patents. Many tools stood idle. There was little utilization of thousands of small firms and garages all over the country.[2]

Take shipbuilding. The National Shipbuilders' Security, Limited had closed down over a fourth of the building capacity in the years before the war. Some of it may have been justified on purely economic grounds, but not much if one takes account of the lack of concentration into efficient units and the absence of any consideration for the skilled labor that lost every basis for its existence. The man who put his energy and drive behind the policy of restricting shipbuilding was Sir James Lithgow and it was he who became the first controller of merchant shipbuilding and repairs.

Take cement. In a striking speech in the House of Lords the Bishop of Birmingham charged the cement manufacturers with having closed down before the war a number of firms which had not yet been reopened. He furthermore alleged that even the existing firms were not producing to full capacity and that some part of their products had been of inferior quality. He concluded that while there was a desperate shortage of cement and that thousands were without air raid shelters as a result, the companies were doing very well financially. Although the Bishop's statements could perhaps not be proved one hundred per cent, public anxiety persisted until there was a change in the control of the industry.

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[2] Reported by the *New Statesman and Nation*.

There is another aspect of this conflict between self-interest and the public good, namely the boundaries of the balance sheet which limit the good intentions of any industrialist. It is to the interest of an industry to keep to the "normal" as long as possible—to keep its labor force, to avoid the expense of training additional workers, to keep as many scarce materials as possible, to persist in its efforts of holding existing markets, brand names, and good will—while it is in the public interest that the "normal" state should be one of war which would entail the loss of many of the assets mentioned above. Even when a firm is working on a government contract, it is in its interest to avoid paying overtime because the margin of profit allowed is generally small, whereas it is in the public interest that the work be done as quickly as possible regardless of the extra cost. It is in the private interest and only human that a controller should shrink from doing harm to the future peace-time position of an industry to which he intends to return one day, whereas it is in the public interest that it be converted as fast as possible regardless of future consequences or present financial losses. It is sometimes in the private interest to take into consideration personal and business friendships, but it is in the public interest that they be ruthlessly subordinated to the exigencies of war, even if it means financial ruin for close associates. These are painful decisions to make; and coming from one of the industry's own men, they are of necessity arrived at after much hesitation, and even then they are generally not sufficiently drastic.

Yet another aspect of the conflict between private and public interest showed itself in the price policies which some of the controllers followed. The Petroleum Board, a trade association which had set itself up as the legal controlling body of the industry, raised its prices twice within two months. Steel prices were increased considerably on several occasions. The British Aluminum Company sold its output to the government at £94 a ton, whereas a price of £65 a ton would have left it, according to Vivyan Adams, M.P., a handsome profit. This was confirmed by the fact that the company made all-time high profits despite rising taxation. The controllers of these industries seemed to act on the principle, "When in doubt, sock the consumer." This at least was the effect of their actions on public opinion.

Some of the controllers still thought in financial instead of real terms. They had not yet learned that in war time materials could no longer be allocated according to the highest yield in profits. They did not realize that financial power availed a country little until it was changed into guns and tanks, that large contracts meant nothing unless they were completed speedily and fully. Thus scarce materials were still devoted to so-called "profitable" uses although materials for essential uses were lacking. On the other hand "unprofitable" sources of scarce materials were not developed because they were considered too expensive to extract and could be bought more cheaply from abroad. Some individual firms seemed to have no sense at all of the real cost of the war, though such examples as the following were no doubt exceptional. After an air raid on Bristol, the following advertisement appeared in the Sunday *Times*:

BRISTOL HITS BACK
BRISTOL INDUSTRIES LTD.
DIVIDEND MAINTAINED AT TEN PER CENT

Or a more recent advertisement in the *Times* which ran:

SOUTHERN MALAYAN TIN DREDGING
ACCOUNTS DISCLOSE SOUND POSITION
ESTATE IS IN ENEMY HANDS

Some controllers insisted on the maintenance of what they considered to be "necessary normal channels of trade." After the fall of Norway England lost more than half of her timber supplies and there was a switch-over to Canadian timber. The government is the only importer of timber, yet the wood is still handled by merchants who used to buy the Norwegian and Baltic timber. Each gets his share and of course the usual ten per cent commission for work that actually was not or need not have been done at all. The cotton brokers were formed into the Cotton Importers and Distributors, Limited, and were paid £500,000 annually for so-called services which had almost all been taken over by the government.

The quality of some of the controllers left much to be desired, chiefly again because they were drawn from the industry which they were to control. Some thought they knew everything and would not listen to advice. Others were not at all sure of themselves and were generally ruled by some section of their industry. Some were of the Napoleon type and tried to wrest to themselves control over industries other than their own. Others thought everything could be done by sitting at a desk and failed to secure the cooperation of employers and workers in their industry. Some had such specialized experience that it was fatal to their good judgment. A farmer found that the lambing season was close at hand and being short of labor he wrote to the Ministry to be excused from ploughing up the remainder of his quota until he had finished with the lambs. The reply was: Postpone the lambing season! Others again did not have enough time to devote to their job of control. Lord Stamp had been placed in the position of an over-all controller. He continued at the same time his work as president of the London, Midland, Scottish Railway, as a Director of the Bank of England, as a director of a big building society and many other companies, as chairman of many schools, churches, and professional organizations. Lord Stamp was said to have worked 63 hours a week; he was reputed to be an able man. But even if these qualifications had been doubled, it would have been impossible for him to do justice to the jobs of controlling the British war effort and advising the government about it.

There were other grounds of complaint against the controllers. They could not help but learn how their competitors were running their business. They could not help but maintain the views they had held in private business. When the paper controller appointed a group of three publishers to allocate extra paper to what they considered "nationally important" books, they were unable to put forward anything outside their own line of interest. One was in favor of increasing the publication of light books, another was in favor of left-wing books, and the third wanted Catholic literature only. This also tends to show that the expert was acquainted with only a part of his industry.

Some of the appointed controllers were simply incompetent. They came from the trade associations which are ineffective and old-fashioned bodies designed to meet other conditions. These men had been chosen in a hurry; they were good association men and so they got the job. Men of proved incompetence like Sir John Gilmour were appointed to high places. When Mr. Chamberlain was reproached with the comment that this was "the most surprising appointment since the Emperor Caligula made his horse a Consul," he replied that the nomination had been made on the basis of "character." Yet men of marked intellectual and business capacity like Mr. Clement Davies, M.P., a director of Lever Brothers, and Mr. Samuel Courtauld, one of Britain's great industrialists, were left out.

The final charge against these early controls was their lack of co-ordination. The main responsibility of control was divided between two departments, the Ministry of Supply and the Ministry of Food. But in practice there was a large number of separate controls, each with its own administration and each acting independently of the others. Thus a manufacturer needing seven different materials might obtain a license for six and then be held up in production for the lack of one. A ship sailed overseas and left a thousand tons of goods on the quay because the license did not arrive in time. Mr. Shinwell, M.P., has told the story of the manufacturer who had a large stock of silk on hand. The Air Ministry wanted him to make parachute parts from it. The Board of Trade told him to keep it in reserve, and so "the silk was held in a state of suspended animation."

Such was the type of control and controller that ran British industry in the opening stages of the war. The result was "the startling inadequacy of production" of which the London *Economist* wrote almost week after week. Then came the string of defeats of the early part of 1940, defeats which were not due to any lack of bravery but to the great inferiority in the quantity of equipment. And what was lacking in materials was lost in lives and land. Chamberlain was superseded by Churchill. It was now inevitable that the system of industrial control should be changed. That change was based on the experiences in World War I gained by Churchill and Lloyd George at the Ministry of Munitions and those of Sir William Beveridge at the Ministry of Food, performing probably the two most successful production drives ever organized. Their success came largely from the fact that their controls were manned with people outside the particular trades with which they were concerned, people who were not tied to the conventions of their industry, people with judgment and wide vision, people who had no personal interests at stake, but people who relied on the experience, knowledge, skill, and help of those who had been trained and engaged in those industries for a long time. Sir William Beveridge who had very likely more experience in controls than any other Englishman used to tell the following story in support of this type of control: a well-known businessman came to the Ministry of Food for a job. He explained that he knew everything about food except cereals. He was promptly appointed controller of cereals and was a great success.

In the last war Mr. Lloyd George displayed the greatest organizing talent on the Allied side. It was he who produced the shells and the guns which saved the French position in 1915. His stupendous achievements were due to some extent at least to his gift of choosing the right type of men. Lloyd George, too, chose as his controllers men who knew nothing of the industry which they controlled. But this by itself was not a good enough qualification for admission to the Ministry of Munitions. The controllers had to be successful businessmen, the great leaders of industry, the best business brains of the country. They were

> the great improvisers, whose value to a country in an emergency is beyond price. In any great crisis, time is a determining factor, and these men save days, weeks and months which make the difference between victory and defeat. . . . In selecting these leading hustlers I had to eliminate those who claimed to know everything, those who did not command the gifts of intuition, rapid decision and force which enable a great improviser to hustle along a gigantic enterprise. . . . I had to mark men like Army lorries "Not to carry more than three tons." For the three tonners were perfect so long as you did not overload them with burdens for which they were not accustomed by Providence. . . .

Clearly Lloyd George was the man to mobilize industry once more when preparations for this war began. Clearly it was he who should have taken a hand in the selection of controllers and the organization of production. His ability, his experience, his fiery appeals to the workers and his powers to carry the people with him went unutilized. He was not consulted, his warnings were not heeded, his books were not read. Were he still willing today, he might yet do great things for the equipment of the armies of the United Nations.

When Churchill became Prime Minister he immediately realized the need for "men of push and go" to supersede "the noble army of controllers." Businessmen were still used in the main to control industry, but they were capable people, drawn from industries other than the one they were to control. The greatest of them all was undoubtedly the new controller of aircraft production, Lord Beaverbrook. One of the finest business brains of our time, he made a fortune in Canadian mines, and another in English newspapers. He had unbounded enthusiasm and energy, much driving power and experience. He surrounded himself with capable subordinates. Already Arnold Bennett had remarked of him that he "showed great judgment of men," and he did not fail now. He chose as his Director of Equipment W. L. Stephenson, chairman of F. W. Woolworth and one of England's most capable businessmen. His adviser was Sir Ernest Simon, an authority on education and housing. His Director General was the chief engineer of one of the big railway companies.

The first thing he did on assuming office was to assemble many of the prominent aircraft manufacturers in his office. He asked them for their production plans. He received their figures with visible disgust and remarked dryly: "If that [meaning output] is so, then in three months' time we won't be here any more and nothing of this will be left." The manufacturers were dismissed from their controlling positions. The next day Beaverbrook toured the factories and fired the inefficient directors. Production-minded men took their place. He also interviewed the workers, took their suggestions for improvement, and gave them responsibility. He brought all aluminum under his control, abolishing the old piecemeal system of administration. He eliminated aluminum in civilian uses. He appealed to labor to work ten to twelve hours a day. He asked the trade unions to allow work for twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week. He appealed for continuation of production during air raids. He urged garage hands and fitters to come to the aircraft factories. He got hold of all the machines he could. He shifted men, materials, and machines from one factory to another, regardless of balance sheets and cost accounts, only with the purpose of securing the largest possible output in the shortest time.

There was an enthusiastic response to Beaverbrook's efforts. Production was speeded up, bottlenecks eliminated, and everybody with skill and ability was put to work on aircraft production. Real progress was made and the rate of increase of aircraft exceeded that of all other types of war materials. "The planes which you produced one week, were the defense of England during the next," said Beaverbrook to the workers and rightly so: the successful defense of England owed much to both.

Another great industrialist who has been a great controller at the same time has been Captain Oliver Lyttleton. Before this war he was manager of the large and important British Metals Corporation and one of the highest paid men in England. On the outbreak of war he became controller of nonferrous metals. He was one of the few successful controllers who came from the industry he controlled. He had no tenderness for vested interests. He did away with the so-called "normal channels of trade" by introducing bulk imports and by concentrating sales in a few outlets. This not only effected considerable economies, but also enabled him to know exactly what quantities of materials were available and how they could best be divided up. He laid in a large reserve of metals and thereby made much valuable shipping space available for the transport of men, munitions, and guns at a later date, when the shipping situation became serious. In October, 1940, he was transferred to the Board of Trade. He warned industry that "it must expect to go through as strict a discipline as the rest of the community." He soon put his words into action by introducing a revolutionary and drastic scheme of concentration in many industries, closing numerous firms in the process. He rationed all clothes, freeing thereby several hundred thousand workers for war production. He controlled prices and profits more rigidly and eliminated all sorts of red tape and delay. He has recently been appointed Minister of Production and great things are expected of him, because of his proved ability, character, and courage.

Today there are quite a number of controllers who are successful at their work, precisely because they are not drawn from the industry which they control. One of them is Lord Leathers who is in charge of transport. He comes from the management of a large coal concern to which he rose at the age of 34, having started out in life with a wage of $1.50 a week. Another is Lord Woolton, the food controller, who was formerly chairman of the department store of Lewis's and its many branches. He is a man of much decision and drive and has gained considerable success and popularity in a post which is one of the most ungrateful imaginable.

Today's controllers do not consist exclusively of businessmen. They are university professors, lawyers, journalists, accountants, and others. The best known from the universities is Sir William Beveridge, director of the London School of Economics. He has a long and brilliant experience in war-time control. In the last war he was one of the chief men at the Ministries of Munitions and Food. Between the two wars he served on many industry commissions, the most important being the Coal Commission of 1925. In this war he has been in the main an adviser on labor questions; recently he issued a far-reaching report on the better utilization of skilled labor. At present he is working out a solution to the troublesome problem of fuel rationing. It has been said of him that his job is to clear up the worst war muddles, and in fact he has always shown great skill and success in clearing up the mess that other people have made.

Sir Arthur Salter is another famous "controlling don." In this war as in the last he is charged with the job of finding and allocating ships for all the Services, of utilizing to the fullest extent the ships which England possesses, of operating and directing the merchant marine to carry the most useful things in the speediest and safest way. Sir Arthur's success has been due to his ability to weigh correctly the many imponderables that all war situations present, particularly shipping. He has avoided what he himself has described as the "statistician's fallacy," that is the error of basing action solely on what is known in precise figures, omitting to weigh and take into account whatever cannot be stated—with its frequently disastrous consequences.

If John Maynard Keynes of Cambridge had chosen to be a controller, he probably would have been an ideal one by reason of his great experience in business, politics, finance, and academic work. As chief representative of the British Treasury in Paris, he was the first to point to the catastrophic consequences of the Treaty of Versailles, as a writer he told British industry how to avoid many of the difficulties that it has since gone through, as the chairman of the National Mutual Insurance Company he raised it to one of the best in the country, and as a bursar of King's College, Cambridge, he made and managed a great estate. By his power of diagnosis and forecast, by his experience and his concern for the interest of the public, he would have admirably fitted as chief of an economic general staff, as a sorely needed "controller of controllers." And though he decides now some important aspects of financial policy, he has remained aloof from the industrial scene, advising, recommending, prophesying.

There is John Hilton, professor of industrial relations and a capable administrator, who introduced the successful food rationing in the last war. In this war he has been responsible for rousing the workers in the production centers of England, and wherever he has gone he has stirred his listeners by the fervor of his appeals and his understanding of their problems.

Among the lawyers Sir Norman Birkett, K.C., has done some excellent control work behind the scenes. Among the management engineers Major Urwick has been called by several big departments of state to introduce business methods and cut red tape. Among journalists Sir Walter Layton, for many years editor of the London *Economist,* has had a long experience at the controls, dating from his work at the Ministry of Munitions in World War I. He now advises the Minister of Production on programs and planning, he sets the output quotas for the various industries and keeps a severe check on performances.

Finally, there is one other type of controller the like of which England never had before: the workers themselves have received a share in the control of individual firms. In some munitions and aircraft factories the representatives of labor have joined with the engineers in running the plants. Both are production-minded, both are for all-out expansion, both do not care a farthing about the balance sheet.

The achievements of the new controls have been considerable. War output which used to be barely 25 per cent of the national income at the beginning of 1940 had been raised to well over 50 per cent in the early months of this year. Two years of war have altered the outlook of the average businessman. Mr. Samuel Courtauld has well summed up the present currents of thought by remarking that there is a growing sense of the inevitability of change which is accepted without bitterness and that there is a truer patriotic feeling resulting in more progressive methods and a reawakening of conscience, a questioning of what can be done in return for the privileges received in the past. In that spirit many have converted their business to a war basis at considerable monetary loss, others are keeping on without making any profit, and still others have gone under without a word of complaint.

A great deal has been achieved. The people of England have submitted to the rigorous and stringent regulations of total war at the cost of great sacrifices. Their courage and tenacity will make possible even more drastic controls and still bigger expansion. Captain Lyttleton has called for a rise of war production to 70 per cent of the national income. To that end many plans, proposals, and suggestions have been made. They have come from Parliament and the press, from management and labor, from pamphleteers and the public at large. Many of them urged an improvement in the control of industry, demanding that the government appoint as controllers businessmen who have no attachment to the industry which they are to control. It is the obvious conclusion that follows from the considerations of this article. It has all the many advantages which the experience of the last war and this has already shown.

However, it is felt that businessmen capable of handling successfully such a complicated administrative job are too rare, for unless they really are "the great improvisers, the men of push and go," their expert advisers will be the actual controllers. That may explain the fact that many industries are still run by men drawn from the industry which they are to control. To avoid this, certain well-known industrialists and some sections of the various political parties have called for new controlling bodies. Each industry is to be run by a committee of three, one representative each from the management and labor of the industry that is to be controlled, and one from the government. The sole function of this semiautonomous body is to achieve maximum output by the allocation of men, materials, and machines to the places where they are of greatest use, to effect economies of scarce factors, and to speed up output, to train labor and to raise the efficiency of management. Though ultimate decisions would be made by the Minister of Production and his coordinating staff this body would wield absolute control over the industry. It would have the advantage of the great experience of management, trained for many years in running a business and knowing its job better than anybody else. This is admitted by labor, but at the same time it is felt that the workers would have many new ideas, that they often take a broader point of view because they represent a whole industry, whereas management is only a part of it, and that finally labor is not too much concerned with long-run considerations. The function of the government representative is to safeguard the interests of the public at large and to cast the decisive vote in case of deadlock. The principle of the three-man control might also be extended to the regional boards of production. Originally designed to exercise speedier and stricter control by reason of their greater proximity to the centers of production, they have dwindled to mere advisory bodies and information bureaus. New controls and new men would inject into them greater authority and better results.

Altogether, it is obvious that controllers must discuss their policies and seek advice before making a decision. There is no reason why they should not be a combination of the three types of controls rather than any one taken singly, why they should not be something between the control by vested interests and the complete administration by slow moving bureaucrats, something that would retain the advantages of individual enterprise, improvements and bold thinking, and yet inject a good dose of altruism.

As for action I do not suggest any revolutionary changes, for who would dare to disrupt production, even for a little while? I suggest a gradual change. I would start perhaps by making the regional boards stronger. Then I would replace inefficient controllers by the semiautonomous bodies which I described or capable businessmen independent of the industry which they administer. But I would leave well-working controls as they are.

I do not expect self-interest to disappear gradually; I do not even expect it to become enlightened everywhere; I do not expect civil servants to turn suddenly into great hustlers and improvisers. I do not envisage the full and immediate success of the joint, semiautonomous controls. But I hope for the total mobilization and right utilization of all the available talents for control. Only then shall we pass the supreme test which Ernest Bevin, Britain's Minister of Labor, brought out so well a few days ago, when he said: "British man power now has been mobilized to the point where the future is not a question of a test between British and German man power, but between British and German managerial ability."

JOHN STEINBECK, MORALIST

By LINCOLN R. GIBBS

THREE OBSTACLES confront the writer of fiction who advocates social reform. First and least important, there is a small number of readers of a metaphysical or aesthetic bent, who dislike literature that deals realistically with contemporary life. They distrust it as partisan and tendentious; they demand that the artist rise above his world or go beyond it and treat life ***sub specie aeternitatis***. Second, opponents of the novelist-reformer have an easy weapon at hand. This is the retort that all his facts are products of his imagination. Third, he must, since he is an artist, supply concrete detail, and much of this detail must needs be sordid, some of it vulgar and uncouth, much of it ribald, immoral, and blasphemous. Graphic pictures of vice and degradation alienate not only the prudish but also thousands of respectable persons, most of whom read fiction solely for entertainment and do not wish to be disgusted, offended, or distressed.

Steinbeck meets all these obstacles in exceptional force, plus a powerful and vocal contingent of business magnates and their minions, who have vested interests in the existing state of things.

The demand that literature concern itself solely with absolute truth and absolute beauty is a voice from the ivory tower, which is not a spacious structure and accommodates few dwellers. This demand may be ignored.

The charge that Steinbeck has invented or distorted his facts takes the case beyond the court of literary criticism into sociology. Most fortunately, the novelist's facts and findings, so far as California is concerned, are verified in the writings of Carey McWilliams and others. Mr. McWilliams' books and articles are widely read. They constitute a documentation of *Grapes of Wrath* and *In Dubious Battle*. Incidentally, it is well worth noting that, although there has been no collaboration, the parallel between Steinbeck and McWilliams is a striking example of the division of labor between art and social science. It is a happy augury of the integration of our national culture. If Steinbeck needs a defense on the score of veracity, well-informed persons are ready to give him support.

The third complaint—of indecency—is, at the moment, the most important. It comes honestly from the very persons who most need to learn what Steinbeck has to impart, the responsible, "middle-class," well-intentioned citizens of America. This charge the artist himself must refute or forestall, within the compass of his creative writings (with such modest aid as friendly critics can render).

The facts must be admitted. There are in Steinbeck's books hundreds of unsavory incidents, ribald speeches, scores of perverts, thieves, lechers, bullies and prostitutes, a few horrible tales of sex perversion[1] and one irreverent parody of a saint's legend.[2] For the reading of Steinbeck one needs a good heart *and a strong stomach*—like the person (in *Tortilla Flat*) who rescues from the ditch a drunken friend who had lain there several days. The rescuer probably held his nose and Steinbeck's readers are often moved to do the same.

There is no adequate defense (though there is mitigation) in the fact that many of the revered classics of literature are open to the same charge. There is abundant pornography in Boccaccio, Chaucer, Rabelais, Shakespeare, Herrick, Fielding, Sterne, Balzac, Samuel Butler, Daudet, and Walt Whitman—not to mention scores of authors who have written since the recent repeal of reticence. There are touches of it even in Robert Browning (a mid-Victorian by date, if not wholly in temper). Some of these authors are used mainly in expurgated versions (notably Shakespeare). In other cases the smut can be isolated, printed in an appendix or omitted, kept off the juvenile shelves, and wholly disregarded by persons whom it offends. But in many works it is an organic element of the pattern (e.g., Shakespeare's *Othello*), as in Steinbeck. If pornography is a cardinal sin, it is matter for penitence in these masters of literature, no less than in smaller writers, since it is part of their total product and an indication of the spirit that was in them. (In fact, Chaucer disavowed his scurrilous tales and Herrick repented of his "unbaptized rhymes," with how much sincerity one is at a loss to say.)

To repeat, the example of great literary masters is no adequate defense. But it is a mitigation and it helps to narrow the issue. It indicates a recognition, by great minds, of animal appetites and physiological facts.

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[1] "The Snake" and "Johnny Bear," in *The Long Valley*.

[2] "St. Katy the Virgin," in *The Long Valley*.

Earth is an obscene planet, if you choose. The philosopher must make the best of its obscenity, among other factors in his problem. The question is that of the author's attitude and purpose. Does he wallow in filth because he loves it? Does he throw it at his readers because he has a mischievous delight in shocking the middle-class puritan? Or perhaps he tells smutty stories by way of an innocent discharge of animal impulses which must otherwise be inhibited? May he not be concerned, as an honest realist, to make a full report of the deeds, talk, and nature of his characters?

Applying these tests to Steinbeck I wholly absolve him from the charge that he loves bestiality for its own sake. Perhaps it fascinates him, as even anguish and horror may fascinate the most innocent and especially the artist, who must have acute sensibility. Steinbeck's senses are delicate and wonderfully perceptive, as evidenced by the California landscapes one finds on his pages—lovely small farms, trim homesteads and gardens, wooded cañons with a little stream at the bottom, mountain ranges and peaks, cliffs bordering the Pacific, rich flat lands in the valleys and at the mouths of rivers. All these he describes in short graphic phrases, with accurately shaded color, with chiaroscuro, outline, and motion. His human sympathies are equally acute, and he has the priceless grace of discovering the redeeming trait in the most degraded person—the prostitute, the jail-bird, the drunkard that neglects his family, even the hard prosperous person who is correct and presentable, but inhumanly cold. He has a special interest in fanatics, eccentrics, half-wits, the insane, the lonely, the ugly, the ridiculous. His treatment of these is sometimes exaggerative and melodramatic—but there is no question of the genuineness of his sympathy.

Now acute perception and lively wide-ranging sympathy are a large part of the artist's equipment. They often betray him into sentimentalism and melodrama; there are instances of this in Steinbeck. But, more to the point in hand, they cause him to see filth and vice, as well as charm, purity, and grace. He wishes to do justice to every fact, like the realist Fra Lippo Lippi, in Browning's poem. We applaud Walt Whitman for ability to feel in his own mind and flesh the terror of the hunted slave as he hears the baying of bloodhounds and to sense the sting of the lash and the drip of mingled blood and sweat; yet many of us (the writer among them) look askance at "Children of Adam." But a poet or novelist cannot have sensibility for one class of experiences without applying it to all.

He may, indeed, refrain from writing poems, plays, or novels about obscene subjects and from isolating horrible and disgusting facts by selective attention. But he cannot, if he wishes to create a comprehensive picture of life, exclude offensive facts.

One suspects that Steinbeck would cheerfully plead guilty to the charge of deliberately shocking the respectables. Convinced as he is that many of them are Pharisees, and deeply impressed by the graces and virtues and wrongs of the proletarians, he would be somewhat less than human if he did not now and then delight in ruffling the composure of prudes and making them squirm. In the preface of *Tortilla Flat* he complains of having suffered long from the oppression of decency. "The unco guid and the rigidly righteous" are a sore trial to generous, sympathetic souls, especially to artists. Their quarrel is not new to begin. One is confident that Shakespeare himself speaks in the voices of Sir Toby and the Clown:

> *Sir Toby.* Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?
>
> *Clown.* Yes, by Saint Anne! and ginger shall be hot i' the mouth too.[3]

Steinbeck overdoes this matter, but his license of speech does not spring from a vile mind; it springs from the heart of a rebel who hates cant and injustice. Many years ago Dr. Holmes, apostle of decorum and consummate flower of the genteel tradition, told us that there are many swearing saints and praying devils in the world. At the very worst, Steinbeck's indecencies should be condoned for the sake of the art and understanding he provides. Probably they are most strongly resented by the very persons who ought most to listen to what he has to say.

II

Tortilla Flat, the first of Steinbeck's books to be widely read, provides illustration. It is an extravaganza, with a good deal of slapstick comedy, a touch of parody (of the *Morte d'Arthur*), and many examples of the author's innuendo. One enthusiastic admirer has set up the enjoyment of *Tortilla Flat* as a criterion of literary taste: if one doesn't like the book, let him not profane the temple of literature, let him be in outer darkness. This is an uncatholic shibboleth; there are persons who dislike even Shakespeare who yet have a lively appreciation of literature.

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[3] *Twelfth Night,* II, iii, 124-7.

The book is a gay trifle. One would not treat it seriously if the author had not invited such treatment. It is a late addition to picaresque fiction; instead of a single thief, it represents a fraternity of rascals and a slum community, in which women of easy virtue bear a shocking ratio to the total population. With a few exceptions the characters are *paisanos,* of Mexican and Indian blood, who live in squalid poverty in the outskirts of Monterey. Their pursuits are fighting, drinking, and making love. The chief persons in the comedy—Danny and his mates—live by minor thefts from their neighbors, merchants in Monterey, and one another. Occasionally—when the emergency is desperate—they reluctantly and shamefacedly do a day's work cutting squids for a Chinese on the wharves. Of a lively Latin temperament, they scorn and evade most that the Anglo-Saxon tradition prescribes, especially the rigorous discipline of Puritanism and industrialism.

They do this with charm, gaiety, and abandon. The result is amusing; and one would be content to let it go at that if the author had not invited us to take these rascals seriously. In the preface to the second edition he deplores the fact that his book has excited the pity of literary slummers for his *paisanos;* he denies that he regards them as underprivileged or underdoggish; he almost repudiates the book. He told the stories because they were true and he loved the characters. He credits them with "honest lusts" and a successsful adaptation to their environment, "which is philosophy." These comments place Steinbeck in the category of moralists.

Successful adaptation to environment is indeed an indispensable element of morality. But for human beings it is not enough—or rather, the environment must be broadly conceived. All that a wholly naturalistic philosophy can provide is survival value; man and woman aspire to something beyond survival. The louse and the tape worm make a fairly successful adaptation to environment, and Steinbeck's *paisanos* of Monterey are almost as parasitic. It is a merry prank to knock out a slat of the fence between Danny's yard and that of the widow who lives next door, so that her chickens may stray through the gap, get lost in the weeds, be captured, and find their destiny on Danny's table. We understand that in this circle property is in disrepute, but in the interim before the advent of total communism, proprietorship in chickens must be respected. Adjustment to environment by thieving is temporary and inadequate. The philosophy of the Monterey *paisanos* lacks range.

Danny and his community have their own code, conventions, taboos, scruples, a film of religion, courtesies, and refinements. They practice the art of relaxation with paradoxical zeal. The best of their ethics is impulsive kindness—as evidenced by their hospitality to the Pirate and their kindness to Teresina and her innumerable brood of children of doubtful paternity. The kindness involved burglary on a considerable scale, to be sure; but the humane motive may be entered on the credit side of the ledger. It is not too strained an interpretation to read this book as a jolly satire of respectable society. Treat the average community as follows: Eliminate the institution of property; reduce marital fidelity to a minimum—or less; raise the per capita consumption of alcohol many degrees; instead of doing your exploitation legally and on a grand scale, do it by petty larceny and burglary; let your charities be matters of sporadic impulse; and spread over the whole a veneer of religion. You then have a parallel between the reputable world and the community of *paisanos*. The proportion of good and evil favors the average community—and that is important; but the ingredients are the same. There—in Tortilla Flat—but for the grace of God, goes Main Street. And did not Kipling tell us that the Colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady are sisters under the skin?

III

I wish to cancel the violent prejudice against Steinbeck in the minds of good people. But this is too defensive and apologetic a process. It would be a gross injustice to ignore the affirmative phase of Steinbeck's work.

The obligation of the novelist to morality is precisely that of the scientist to truth: objectivity and impartiality. Since the writer of fiction has to do with human values, he must needs possess sympathies and antipathies, so that the achievement of objectivity and impartiality is far more difficult for him than for the chemist or the physicist. Appreciation of human nature in all its variety has never been achieved—not even by Chaucer or Browning, not even by Shakespeare. If we applaud the scientist for restricting his field, we should permit the novelist to select his province and have his favorite types. We should insist only that he tell us the whole truth within the limits he chooses.

Steinbeck's selection includes mainly the rebels, the outcasts, the underdogs of our society—ranch-hands, Okies, fruit-pickers, cotton-pickers, small farmers in California. He represents these as victims of injustice, the special forms of injustice being chiefly results of the mechanization of agriculture. In California the conditions of land tenure and the character of the product cause and magnify all the evils that industrialism had brought earlier to factory towns: poverty and extreme wealth, overproduction, bad housing and sanitation, strikes, armed conflict, perversion of justice in the interest of owners, destruction of property and life, danger of violent revolution.

This is Steinbeck's theme in *In Dubious Battle*. Mainly, he treats it with impartiality, despite the strength of his sympathy with the laborers and the small farmers. To be sure, the owners and their minions—police, checkers, vigilantes, even judges and clergymen—get short shrift in his pages; but why should they not? The technique of the art of fiction precludes anything else. The story is told from the angle of the leaders of the strike—Mac, Jim Nolan, and the others. From their point of view their opponents showed nothing but cruelty, chicanery, cant, and tyrannical power, whatever private virtues they may have had. The mind of a novelist—or reader—is not a camera of universal focus. Only a small part of the picture appears in exact detail.

Steinbeck's treatment of the strikers is not flattering. Most of them are coarse; a few are cowards and turncoats; some are shortsighted and self-indulgent. In the mass they are subject to inconstant gusts of emotion—now ferociously valiant, now whimpering with discomfort and fear. They remind one of Tennyson's etching of the populace:

> The people here, a beast of burden slow,
> Toiled onward, pricked with goads and stings;
> Here played, a tiger, rolling to and fro
> The heads and crowns of kings;
>
> Here rose an athlete, strong to break or bind
> All force in bonds that might endure,
> And here once more like some sick man declined,
> And trusted any cure.[4]

The leaders are steadfast almost to the point of fanaticism, but they are no heroes of romance, complete with every imaginable strength and grace. They lie; they foment strife for the sake of their cause; they take advantage of every atrocity committed by their opponents, in order to inflame the hearts of their followers. They fight the devil with fire. The charge that the novelist has loaded the dice will not hold. Indeed, the realism of his treatment puts weapons into the hands of the oppressors and gives persons who ought most to ponder his disclosures a pretext for disregarding them.

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[4] *The Palace of Art.*

Steinbeck's treatment of mass emotion in *In Dubious Battle* is masterly. In comparison with it the mob scenes of Dickens,[5] Mark Twain,[6] and Galsworthy[7] seem melodramatic. In this connection one should read "The Vigilante." As a story this piece has little merit; its value is its insight into the mind of a mob. It is concerned with the mental state of a mediocre person who has just taken part in a lynching. The aftermath, not the event, is the theme; and the aftermath is like that of a sexual debauch—satiation, fatigue, disgust. The picture is not pretty, but it has useful information concerning one of the major scandals of American civilization.

Concerning Steinbeck as a moralist one has some misgivings. Revulsion from hypocrisy and prudery carries him to a violent extreme. For example, he treats prostitution as a merry jest—as in the story of the two *paisano* sisters in *The Pastures of Heaven*. One of the men in *Of Mice and Men* expresses preference for a "clean cat-house" over marriage as a means of satisfying and regulating the appetite of sex; and in the same story the social graces of a "madam" are celebrated with no little enthusiasm. Of course these sentiments need not be attributed to Steinbeck himself, although in the preface of *Tortilla Flat* he attempts to place the "hure lady" and her patrons on the plane of respectability. Adulteries and casual sex adventures are condoned—sometimes with an indulgent smile, as negligible peccadillos; sometimes with approval, as revolts against too rigorous domestic discipline; sometimes with applause, as means of obtaining money or food from fatuous female sympathizers with the radical cause. One story, "The Murder"[8] (if it may be taken seriously), is a total anachronism. An injured husband vindicates his honor by neatly puncturing the skull of his wife's lover with a rifle bullet and beating his wife within an inch of her life with a bull whip. The sheriff puts the murderer under arrest, as a matter of form, but assures him that no conviction ever results in such cases. And the couple live happily ever after. This tale contains every element of an antiquated morality, including the double standard of sex, for the husband was not himself a model of marital fidelity. Long ago Maeterlinck made an eloquent protest against the pseudo-duty of a husband's vindicating his honor and gave us a vivid dramatic version of the protest in the last act of *Monna Vanna*. Steinbeck's story is a reversion to barbarism. The massive impression of his fiction is that sex (as among animals) is an innocent necessary appetite, in little need of control or regulation.

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[5] *Barnaby Rudge*, chap. liv and later chapters.

[6] *Huckleberry Finn*, chap. xxii.

[7] *The Mob*, Act IV.

[8] In *The Long Valley*.

And this is the clue to the defects of Steinbeck's ethics. Man has been defined as "the animal that laughs, and that loves all the year round." The second clause of the differentia suggests that, unlike that of other animals, man's reproductive instinct is not regulated by nature and restricted to its natural purpose—the production of children. Moreover, the prolongation of infancy in the human species makes necessary the institution of the family—a permanent relation between parents. Animal promiscuity does not comport with this institution.

Steinbeck's sex morality is not even primitivism or animalism. It is human license, and would, if allowed to prevail, destroy humanity. It is supported, in Steinbeck's writings, by a fantastic nature mysticism or by an almost equally fantastic humanism. The humanism involves the conception of "group-man"—the soul of aggregate humanity, which has interests and passions of which individual men and women—cells in the body of group-man—can discern only the vaguest hints. For example, individuals, as pioneers on their journey to California, desire new acres for settlement; group-man desires only "westering," for what end one may only guess. Adequate discussion of these religious ideas must be postponed; but they should receive passing attention, if only to indicate that Steinbeck's immoralities are not mere incidents in his thinking, or the mere violent swing of the pendulum away from social conventions. They are grounded in a comprehensive immature philosophy—or perhaps in two such philosophies.

IV

It is unfortunate that these phases of Steinbeck obscure the timely value of his work. His human sympathies and his artist's perceptions are far better than his lax morality of sex or his confused philosophizing. His indignation against "the oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely, the insolence of office, and the spurns that patient merit of the unworthy takes" is all to the good. His moral value is an achievement, not a theory—the achievement of dramatizing the plight of migrant laborers, which is only one example (perhaps the worst) of the injustices of our civilization. Shakespeare made a vast contribution to the humanization of mankind, with only the faintest traces of metaphysics or even of a social and political philosophy. He was—if you choose—a noncritical humanist. Sympathy and imagination did the trick. And it would probably be well for all artists to emulate Shakespeare in this respect, at least until their more analytical philosophies have had time to mature. Meanwhile, we may be grateful to Steinbeck, that he has applied his sympathies and imagination to neglected areas of American life.

We Americans worship with elaborate rites at the shrine of efficiency. It is profitable to compare the icons of that religion that most of us carry in our minds with those of Steinbeck. What picture forms in our minds when we pronounce the dear polysyllable *efficiency*? Is it not that of a corporation executive or a super-banker, seated behind an imposing desk in a luxurious office, with a battery of telephones in front of him and a row of push buttons under his hand? He is supported by a corps of secretaries, one of whose principal duties is to protect the great man from irrelevant intrusions and enable him to think the vast thoughts appropriate to his station. This is not Steinbeck's picture of efficiency. He thinks of a small thrifty hard-working farmer or ranch-owner, of his employee, the ranch-hand, expert in horses, of the old "top-faller"—a lumberman who had spent a long life of labor, danger, and skill and whose main grievance was that now in his old age he must surrender his pride of occupation and descend to the ignoble work of picking apples in the orchard of a corporation. Steinbeck might take Slim, the crack mule skinner, as the type of efficiency, or even young Anderson, the proprietor of a lunch wagon, who could serve a tasty stew, with pie, for a quarter, and knew how to toast a hamburg sandwich to an appetizing turn. Steinbeck might think of Tom Joad, who was a driver and motor-mechanic expert enough to drive a ramshackle jalopy from Oklahoma to California without breakdown or mishap. Steinbeck delights to recognize the efficiency of such obscure persons. By this recognition he does democracy a service. On the whole they do their jobs far better than the corporation magnate does his, and in the aggregate their labors are quite as important to the national well-being. Walt Whitman catalogues these inarticulate Americans, with notes of admiration; but he seldom shows them in action. Steinbeck's portrayals are motion pictures; he shows the men at the job. Perhaps he can teach us that, pre-eminently in a democracy, they deserve both praise and pudding.

These sympathies have taken the novelist into the class conflict. *In Dubious Battle* is the story of a strike of fruit growers on a California ranch. This strike is a peculiarly instructive event. On the side of capital the whole county—courts, police, government, Associated Farmers, banks, the more powerful makers of sentiment, vigilantes, even the clergy—was organized in favor of the large ranch owners. On the side of the strikers were the smaller fruit-growers and many sympathizers in the towns, who, however, dared not express their sympathy openly. There was no union; indeed, the laborers strongly distrusted the radicals who incited and attempted to organize the strike. A strike is war on a small scale, with all the advantage of money, munitions, and the favor of government on one side. Only one condition favored the strikers—the perishability of fruit. Fruit must be harvested within a few days, and a force of scab labor must be brought from a distance. The time factor gave the strikers a slight advantage. Fruit-growers cannot close the plant, store the product, and await a favorable turn of events, like factory-owners. The laissez-faire doctrine, based on the assumption of equality of bargaining power between employer and laborer, unrealistic as it is, has a slight show of validity in the employers' need of many workers at the time of harvest. If the strikers can beg enough food from sympathizers to keep themselves alive for a few days and can prevent scabs from entering the orchards, the employers must come to terms. But their small advantage availed them nothing. Government, money, the courts, and the weight of public sentiment were too strong for them. If government had faithfully discharged the function assigned to it by the classical theory—that of safeguarding impartially the legal rights of both parties—the outcome might have been different. But government was no impartial umpire, enforcing the rules of the game; it became a tool of the more powerful interests. The failure of the strike demonstrates the hopeless situation of unorganized labor. Political democracy fails in an emergency, because nothing remotely like economic equality is to be seen.

V

On the score of morality it is all to the good that the novelist penetrate to the heart of his characters, especially if his characters are beyond the respectable pale. Good people express loathing for the persons in *Of Mice and Men* and *The Grapes of Wrath.* Why should one associate with such people in books, since one avoids them in life? To waive the question whether it is right utterly to shun the company of immoral persons, one may reply that fiction is useful largely as a means of extending one's knowledge of men beyond the possible or expedient range of experience. It is unwise for most people to be among tigers in the jungle; caged in a zoo the animals may be admired and studied in safety. The art of fiction is an animal cage—and something more, to be sure; it permits an intimate study of evil beasts.

But the novelist does more than this for defective and degraded characters. He throws a light into their souls. The dream of Lennie and George, of a few acres and a little house, where they might live in comfort and independence—that is the gleam of positive light from within. It is not an extravagant aspiration, and not a lofty one; but it is deeply human. If it could have been realized, it might have developed into something nobler. People of no opportunities move toward the future in short stages; too often the next meal is the limit of their flights. But a human being is progressive: if his necessities are supplied, he begins to think of ideals. The pair of friends could never become great men, since one was a half-wit and the other a rude unlearned man; but they might have become good neighbors and useful citizens.

The novelist of insight confers more benefit on humanity by the interpretation of characters than by the advocacy of reforms. Since he must have imagination and heart, he is drawn almost inevitably into current conflicts. These are the temporary shapes which the age-long interests of humanity assume. New obstacles are set up in the path of men and women, but these new obstacles are mainly a new outer form of the old. The special issues change and disappear, like fashions of dress; but the substance of human nature changes slightly and slowly and the direction of its aspirations is constant. The permanent value of drama and fiction is the revelation of the permanent essence. To be sure, this essence must be clothed in the garb of the times. Novelists must sense the conflicts of their own age and sometimes take sides in them. But Tolstoi's greatest work was done as an artist, not a reformer, and the same is probably true of Galsworthy. Probably it is true even of Dickens and certainly of Howells. On the other hand, there is something deficient in a novelist who shows no interest in the struggles of his own age; he is too detached and cold. Even Henry James, the expatriate and denizen of the ivory tower, manifests a moralist's interest in the uprooted Americans he met in Europe.

Steinbeck has associated his name with the migrant laborers and other underprivileged groups. He espouses their cause. In his writings so heavy an emphasis falls on their hard lot that other aspects of his work are ignored. But the problem of the migrants is more than a current problem. It is the occasion that brings heroism to light. The Okies and the striking fruit-pickers do and dare as well as suffer. Tom Joad and Jim Nolan would be heroes in whatever period and social class their lot might be cast. Ma Joad would be womanly and maternal in any station. If she had been a duchess, she would have labored with heroism for the integrity of the family and would have had a comprehensive vision of the serious social obligations of her class. The scene of her farewell to Tom, in the latter part of *Grapes of Wrath,* is of the pure essence of motherhood. The pathos is profound and free from a taint of sentimentality. The courage and devotion of the woman are sublime. With a more fortunate rearing and a better education Mac and Jim would have been leaders in some cause of social betterment. Less conspicuous characters are equally human—the ranch-hand in "The Red Pony," the boy hero, his parents, and his grandfather. The boy is a more complete embodiment of the essence of boy than even Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer.

"A field full of folk" is the subject matter of literature. One returns to the dictum of Howells, the humanitarian—a dictum inspired by the reading of Tolstoi: "Men are more like than unlike one another. Let us make them know one another better, that they may be all humbled and strengthened with a sense of their fraternity."[9] For thousands of readers Steinbeck has accomplished this. Thanks to him we sense the wrongs, the virtues, the potential strength of thousands of our fellow citizens whom we had not known. His writings make for democracy.

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[9] *Criticism and Fiction* (1891), p. 188.

SOME NOTES ON JOHN STEINBECK

By STANLEY EDGAR HYMAN

THE HEATED CONTROVERSY over John Steinbeck's *The Moon Is Down,* which has been raging in the press since the book's publication in March, has been concerned almost wholly with misleading or extraneous issues. Reviewers and letter writers have centered their discussion around two general questions: Is the book true to Nazi conquest? and, Does it aid in the anti-Nazi struggle? Obviously, no book is "true" to anything as large and many-faceted as Nazi conquest; the only question that can be asked is what truth or part of truth does Steinbeck present, and why. As critics of the book admitted, men like Lanser and Tonder, the doubting Nazi and the neurotic Nazi respectively, undoubtedly exist in the German Army (Ambassador Dodd describes several Lansers in his book, someone pointed out) but what percentage of the army can they be said to represent? Tonder, for example, although described by Steinbeck as "trained in the politics of the day, believing the great new system invented by a genius so great that he never bothered to verify its results," is so far unaffected by the Aryan ideal as to (1) love dark women, (2) quote Heine, and (3) be completely unimpressed by Goebbels' releases.

Steinbeck's "truth" about the Nazis would seem to be a "truth" about a small group of German army officers (privates are hardly mentioned in the book, and the action revolves wholly around a group of five officers), and of that group only the tiny percentage of unconvinced, hysterical, passive, or desperate officers. These people are probably all "true"; that is, their parallels exist. But why is Steinbeck interested in them? The other question, whether the book aids in the fight against the Axis, is so complicated, depends so much on the answer to the first question, on a knowledge of just what literature helps the war and how, and on the answer to a really tough question, whether Steinbeck is *concerned* with aiding in the fight against the Axis, that it is not a thing to be answered off the top of any letter-writer's head.

If those are the wrong questions, what are the right questions? First, of course, the two old standbys: What does the book actually deal with? and, Why was it written? The answers to them are in the body of Steinbeck's other work, in the nature of his preoccupations and interests, and are most readily available in his recent *Sea of Cortez,* which was a direct and invaluable nonfiction statement of his beliefs and ideas, at least at that time. One thing *The Moon Is Down* is *not* about, it may be said definitely, is the German conquest of Norway. The conquerors do seem to be German, although the words "German," "Nazi," and "Hitler" are never used.[1] That is, they wear gray helmets, they are at war with England, and they fought in Belgium and France twenty-odd years before.

Steinbeck, however, has taken great pains (which seem to have been wasted) to make the invaded country not Norway: it is distinctly stated as having been invaded during the conflict between Germany and the Soviet Union, that is, after June, 1941, and in the autumn (Norway was invaded in the spring, April of 1940, more than a year before the attack on Russia). What we know about the country is that it is a cold northern land, it is fairly close to England (men escape and row to England in boats), it is possibly Scandinavian (its citizens have such names as Orden, Morden, Winter, Corell) and that it is invaded in the autumn of 1941 or any autumn after that. Since no country even remotely answering to that description has been invaded since the attack on Russia, the book is obviously describing a hypothetical attack in the future, on Sweden or on some nonexistent northern country. The mythical nature of this country is made more manifest, as Isidor Schneider pointed out in another connection, by the fact that this strange seaport town in this strange country seems to have no political parties, no trade unions, and no organizations of any kind, either democratic, fifth-column, or neutral.

A major clue to the meaning of *The Moon Is Down* is its form. From internal evidence it seems to have been written first as a play, and then rewritten as a novel, with each of the eight scenes made into a chapter. The directions are obviously directions for stage business, the setting is stage setting, and the dialogue is clearly written as stage dialogue. The easiest way to demonstrate this is to take any chapter ending, where the dramatic structure becomes particularly obvious in terms of Curtain, and change all past tenses to the theatrical present. Here, for example, is the ending of Chapter Two, with nothing altered but tense, punctuation, and the omission of the word "says":

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[1] Steinbeck's naming and absence of naming is very interesting. His book about the Communist Party, *In Dubious Battle,* never uses the word Communist. None of the principal characters in *The Moon Is Down* has first names, except the Mordens (who require it, since there are two of them) and the local Quisling. None of the principal characters in *Tortilla Flat* had last names (except Jesus Maria, who would seem to need one). Curley's wife in *Of Mice and Men* never had any other name but that.

> Lanser (standing up slowly and speaking as though to himself): So it starts again. . . .
> Prackle: What do you say, sir?
> Lanser: Nothing. . . . (He turns to Loft) Please give my compliments to Mayor Orden. . . .
> (Major Hunter looks up, dries his inking-pen carefully, and puts it away in a velvet-lined box.)

It needs nothing but the notation "Slow Curtain" after it.

It is worth noting that *Of Mice and Men* was also a short playlike novel with what the publisher's blurb calls "the disciplines of time and place" (all its action takes place from dusk Thursday to dusk Sunday) although, unlike *The Moon Is Down* it appears to have been first written in novel form and then dramatized. The fact that at two definite places in Steinbeck's work his material seems to have worked itself naturally into a dramatic form is important, and in this connection it is interesting to observe Thomas Mann's explanation for his use of the play form in "Royal Highness." He says in his preface to *Stories of Three Decades*:

> I was driven to the dialogue form, I suppose, on account of the dialectical matter of this study of the Renaissance; the historical setting only serves as pretext for an exposition of opposed elements in my own nature.

It is not hard to demonstrate that Steinbeck was "driven" to the dialogue form by a necessity similar to Mann's, the conflict between two points of view in himself and his work having grown so sharp as to require direct pro and con talking, and that his two plays are consequently pivotal points in his work, expressing that conflict most sharply, and, incidentally, each signalizing a marked break or change of direction.

Another pertinent problem about *The Moon Is Down* is its rather strange title. Stylistically, it is right in the tradition of Steinbeck titles (two strongly accented words), but in terms of meaning, it seems less significant than either some flat and transparent naming, like *The Grapes* *of Wrath,* or a place name like *Sea of Cortez.* Reviewers have been quick to point out that the moon hardly enters the book (actually it is mentioned twice, both times, amusingly enough, as throwing little light, and neither time very significantly). James Thurber, in his sharp and discerning review in *The New Republic,* claimed that the title is too ethereal, that a war story should have a title like *Guts in the Mud,* and that Steinbeck may have started from this dreamy title and so found himself writing what Thurber refers to as "Robert Nathan's best book.[2]

Actually the title is a quotation from Shakespeare, as the dramatic critics discovered after a decent interval. It is in the second line in Act II, Scene 1, of *Macbeth,* and is spoken by Fleance to Banquo, in reply to his question: "How goes the night, boy?" The whole line is "The moon is down; I have not heard the clock." It would thus mean that the night is dark, and, considering Macbeth's subsequent murder of Duncan, ominous. The only significant line in the passage is Fleance's next speech, which tells Banquo, with unconscious meaningfulness, that it is later than he thinks. All of which is only mildly impressive, since the relationship between Macbeth's murder of his king and the Nazi occupation of a small seacoast town is cloudier than seems necessary, and it would seem to be worth while to look for other meaning for the title in the rest of Steinbeck's work.[3]

Actually, the symbol of the moon means a great deal to John Steinbeck, and it runs through his work like a recurrent theme. In *Cup of Gold,* Steinbeck's first novel, he equates it with unattainable ambition of a sexual nature. Merlin, the old wise man of Wales, gives his wisdom to Henry Morgan:

> "I think I understand," he said softly. "You are a little boy. You want the moon to drink from as a golden cup; and so, it is very likely that you will become a great man—if only you remain a little child. All the world's great have been little boys who wanted the moon; running and climbing, they sometimes caught a firefly. But if one grows to a man's mind, that mind must see

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[2] One group to whom the title has been a godsend are the popular song-writers, who immediately dashed off a popular song along the lines of "The White Cliffs of Dover" or "My Sister and I."

[3] For the suggestion of this line of inquiry, as well as for many other ideas in this article, I am indebted to Professor Leonard Brown of Syracuse University, who was kind enough to place his stimulating and intensive study of Steinbeck at my disposal.

> that it cannot have the moon and would not want it if it could—and so, it catches no fireflies."

Later, "the golden cup" that the moon is to Morgan becomes the town he sacks, Panama (which the Spaniards call the Cup of Gold), and specifically a very desirable woman in it. Thus the moon and the golden cup (the symbol of his taking Panama is the capture of a literal golden chalice) both represent the Grail, a rather traditional female sex symbol. Later in the book, the moon is used as a setting for an attempted seduction of Morgan, and another character in the book tells him of a very interesting conjecture about how the inhabitants of the moon might have very unusual *necks* (this neck-moon business turns up later).

In *To a God Unknown,* Steinbeck's early mystic novel, the moon is frankly described as a female sex symbol (a golden moon is pierced, apparently by a sharp pine tree, which is withdrawn as the moon arises) and is then equated with fertility when it is used as a sign for rain in a time of drought, and when a pregnant woman rides out to a mystic grotto of fertility on a horse named Moonlight. It is sterility as well as fertility, however, and one of the characters, who has been obsessed with nightmares of "a bright place that is dry and dead" where people come out of holes and pull off his arms and legs, commits suicide (hanging himself by the *neck*) when he gets his first look through a telescope and finds that the moon is the dry place of his dreams. Incidentally, *To a God Unknown* is the only one of Steinbeck's books where I was able to find the specific sentence, "The moon is down." It occurs, very significantly, when a magic spring, the only water remaining in a land of drought, is finally running dry, and one character gives the protagonist Joseph bulletins about the moon to match his bulletins about the state of the spring ("The moon is going down," "The moon is down," and so on).

In *Tortilla Flat,* the moon dripping blood is one of the legendary signs celebrating the death of Danny, the superhuman and lecherous hero. In *In Dubious Battle,* the Doctor says: "You say I don't believe in the cause [Communism]. That's like not believing in the moon." In the short story "The Murder" in *The Long Valley,* the moon is identified with a wife's adultery, and finally lights her in bed with her lover before her husband's eyes. In *The Grapes of Wrath,* the moon is identified with sexual passion when it drives a pair of lovers to embrace, and it later shines on Tom Joad when he goes out to meet Casy, witness and avenge

Casy's death, and assume Casy's personality and mission. In *Sea of Cortez,* Steinbeck states explicitly his theory that the moon, next to the sea, is the strongest "racial" or mystic memory in us, with the lunar rhythm deeply rooted in our unconscious, and that "all physiological processes might be shown to be influenced by the tides" (or moon), as is menstruation and, in some animals, the phenomenon of sexual heat.

It should be apparent from this evidence that the moon has a very special significance for Steinbeck, that it associates for him a whole context of factors: women, the unattainable, the Grail, fertility and sterility at once (in *To a God Unknown* they are both aspects of the same thing, the mystic female Earth symbol which is central to the book), mystic factors of racial unconsciousness, the relationship between Tom and Casy, and a Cause. Thus, when Steinbeck calls his book *The Moon Is Down* he means less that Duncan is about to be murdered, that it is dark and later than you think, than that his personal moon is down, the moon of Henry Morgan's romantic individualism, of the mystic and unattainable Woman-Grail, of a Cause or Mission, and of a whole past nexus of preoccupations.[4]

The basic problem in Steinbeck's work is the familiar one of the individual (that is, John Steinbeck as artist) in relation to society. In that sense, all his books are social. Around this problem, the books move in two marked trends, from extreme unsociality or individualism to a height of sociality, and then back again to individualism with a new name, this time scientific isolation. The first pivotal point is the play-novel *Of Mice and Men* and the second pivotal point is the play-novel *The Moon Is Down.*

In Steinbeck's first general "period," up to *Of Mice and Men,* the growing sociality is expressed by a constant search for "solutions," each one of which is tried, rejected, and symbolically killed off. *Cup of Gold,* a characteristic first novel about a bold bad pirate, experiments with the completely individualistic strivings of Henry Morgan. They fail, and Morgan dies in ironic bourgeois domesticity. *Pastures of Heaven,* the next book, tries the viewpoint that nature and the "natural" life are worth while, and only man is vile. This also fails, and of its two principal exponents, one, the amiable idiot Tularecito is committed to an asylum for the criminal insane, and the other, Junius Maltby, is convinced by well-meaning neighbors that raising his boy in natural freedom is harmful to the child, and is driven back to the city. In *To a God Unknown,* Steinbeck toys with formal religion, pagan rites, and every other supernatural device he can get his hands on, with no greater success. In *Tortilla Flat,* Steinbeck carries his natural man of *The Pastures of Heaven* to an extreme, the completely amoral California *paisanos,* whose activities consist almost entirely of sleeping, drinking, and copulation (one of them states the totality of their desires as "wine, food, love and firewood"). In *In Dubious Battle,* Steinbeck picks up and rejects the solution offered by his concept of the Communist Party.

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[4] It is obvious that almost any problem raised by *The Moon Is Down* can be solved in this manner, since Steinbeck has published a rich enough body of work to constitute almost his autobiography.

The general characteristics of this "period" are a growing preoccupation with the common or working people, the milieu moving from the pirates and slave-owners of *Cup of Gold,* through the middle-class landowners of *Pastures of Heaven* and *To a God Unknown,* to the migratory workers of *In Dubious Battle.* Along with this, the individual "hero" declines, from Henry Morgan, who is a proper Nazi *führer* (several years before the Nazis came to power), through Joseph in *To a God Unknown,* a mystic individualist, to Danny, in *Tortilla Flat,* who leads the *paisanos* in terms of friendship, and Mac and Jim of *In Dubious Battle,* who lead the workers by working alongside them. The strong emphasis on the rejection of solutions in this period comes through most clearly in *To a God Unknown,* where Steinbeck gives each of them a chance to bring rain in a drought: the folk try weather signs, the priest prays, the bartender offers to put out a free barrel of whiskey, and Joseph manipulates his mystic pagan symbols. All fail, and finally only Joseph's sacrificial suicide brings the rain.

Steinbeck's social attitude toward the end of this period, as it jells, seems to be best expressed by the Doctor in *In Dubious Battle.*[5] This doctor is a mystery to the Communists in the book. He works constantly with the Party, he never receives compensation, and he seems to have no faith in their doctrines but to be always ready to help them. Finally he tells Mac and Jim his beliefs. "I want to see the whole picture," he says.

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[5] Before the publication of *Sea of Cortez,* Edmund Wilson hazarded a guess that this Doctor spoke for Steinbeck. Now, in *Sea of Cortez,* this is confirmed, and the views Steinbeck states as his own turn out to be almost word for word those he gave the Doctor five years before.

> I want to *see*. When you cut your finger, and streptococci get in the wound, there's a swelling and a soreness. That swelling is the fight your body puts up, the pain is the battle. You can't tell which one is going to win, but the wound is the first battleground. If the cells lose the first fight the streptococci invade, and the fight goes on up the arm. Mac, these little strikes are like the infection. Something has got into the men; a little fever has started and the lymphatic glands are shooting in reinforcements. I want to see, so I go to the seat of the wound. . . . Group men are always getting some kind of infection. This seems to be a bad one.
>
> I want to *see,* Mac. I want to watch these group-men, for they seem to me to be a new individual, not at all like single men. A man in a group isn't himself at all; he's a cell in an organism that isn't like him any more than the cells in your body are like you. I want to watch the group and see what it's like. People have said, "Mobs are crazy, you can't tell what they'll do." Why don't people look at mobs not as men, but as mobs? A mob nearly always seems to act reasonably, for a mob.

Later he explains why he helps, in addition to "observing," social "wounds":

> Maybe if I went into a kennel and the dogs were hungry and sick and dirty, and maybe if I could help those dogs, I would. Wouldn't be their fault they were that way. You couldn't say "Those dogs are that way because they haven't any ambition. They don't save their bones. Dogs always are that way." No, you'd try to clean them up and feed them. I guess that's the way it is with me. . . .

His own part, though, is never revolutionary, always stated in terms of "helping." In regard to social change, he has Huxley's dogmatic faith in the identity of means and ends:

> But in my little experience the end is never very different in its nature from the means. Damn it, Jim, you can only build a violent thing with violence.

At the end of the first "period" is *Of Mice and Men,* the turning point away from sociality and the beginning of the second trend. Thus *Of Mice and Men,* despite the superficial radicalism of *In Dubious Battle* and *The Grapes of Wrath,* is actually the most social of Steinbeck's books.[6] What has proved misleading about it is that the book functions on two marked levels, the symbolic and the real, and that despite their vastly different directions and meanings, it has proved hard for most readers to keep them separate. On the symbolic level, *Of Mice and Men* is backward-looking, to Steinbeck's rejection of social formulas. Symbolically, it deals with the attempt of George, who seems to be Steinbeck's type for the radical (he is physically much like Mac in *In Dubious Battle,* he constantly emphasizes the sacrificial nature of his leadership, he does the "talking") to lead Lennie, a symbol of the masses, to a utopia. George has the same faith in his ability to lead Lennie that Steinbeck attributes to his radicals leading the masses. ("Jus' tell Lennie what to do and he'll do it if it don't take no figuring. He can't think of nothing to do himself, but he sure can take orders.") But Lennie fails him, he is too strong and untrustworthy, too subject to temptation, and the utopia fails with him.[7]

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[6] It was also his first extensive commercial success.

However, on the real level, the book is forward-looking, into the next period of declining sociality and decreasing faith in the efficacy of change. Realistically, what fails is simply the attempt of a worker, George, to get out of his class into the small owning class. This obvious, foolhardy ambition collapses, the vessel of George's discontent (Lennie), is killed off, and at the end Steinbeck hints at the formation of a new alliance between George and the adjusted worker functioning successfully within his class, Slim. Thus the two meanings of the book look in opposite directions, one disposing of Steinbeck's old preoccupations and the other anticipating the new. This same conflict, like Mann's, is expressed literally in the dialogue-dialectic of the play itself, with one character always saying "You can't get your little farm" and another always answering "I can too." The play structure of the book also facilitates such symbolic effects as George's constant game of *solitaire,* his regular repetition of how without Lennie he could "get along so easy" (he could have a girl, or go to a whorehouse, or get drunk, or eat good food), and the structure whereby all the other characters, each representing a point of view, point out how pleasant it is to "talk" to Lennie because instead of listening he thinks only of his own desires.

Steinbeck's second "period," from *Of Mice and Men* through *Sea of Cortez* is a period of declining and, finally, vanishing sociality. The emphasis shifts from social change by active agitation, to change by science and education, to, finally, a scientific isolation. At the same time, the concept of "hero" or leader, that had almost vanished in the earlier period, returns and augments. The difference between the labor leaders of *In Dubious Battle,* suggesters from the ranks, and Casy and Tom Joad in

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[7] The utopian dream is not dead, it still functions as belief (Candy tries to carry it on, and it is still deep in Crooks' mind) but for all practical purposes it has failed.

The Grapes of Wrath, men who "come" to the workers with a "gospel," makes this evident. The first book prefigures the second in many ways (it has a young worker, Joey, trying to solve his social problem by studying to be a postman, like Connie's utopian correspondence school course; it has a morally good, social murder, Sam's, that anticipates Tom Joad's) so that the differences are particularly significant. The aim of *In Dubious Battle* is expressed in its epigraph from Milton, Satan's lines:

> What though the field be lost?
> All is not lost—the unconquerable will,
> The study of revenge, immortal hate,
> And courage never to submit or yield:
> And what is else not to be overcome?

It relies on a future militancy, an eventual triumph in the future on the basis of the failure of the present—a revolutionary aim. The ideal of *The Grapes* is the utopian New Dealism of the government camp, which may be a different society symbolically, but which is nevertheless achieved realistically by benevolent and paternal government action.

The first book in this new "period" is a collection of short stories, *The Long Valley,* first published in a limited edition called *The Red Pony* (Steinbeck's first, and, fortunately, last attempt at that Edna Millay trick). These stories appear to have been written over a period of years, rather than at the same time (as were the stories that constitute his second book, *The Pastures of Heaven*), and are only bound together loosely by their common setting in the Salinas Valley. One of them, "St. Katy the Virgin," seems to have been published separately in book form as early as 1936. Many of them show evidence of having been written after *Of Mice and Men,* but some, like "The Vigilante" and "The Raid," appear to have been written earlier, about the time of *In Dubious Battle,* and share with it a preoccupation with respectively, the nature of the mob and the nature of radical martyrdom. Their general theme seems to be, as Edmund Wilson has pointed out, an identification of people with animals, and their various "solutions" range over the whole width of Steinbeck's work, from the study of an individual rebellion like Morgan's in *Cup of Gold* ("Flight") to an essay in the scientific isolation Steinbeck reaches in *Sea of Cortez* ("The Snake").

The Grapes of Wrath, Steinbeck's major work of this period, has been so generally misunderstood that critics are still able to howl as every new work fails to repeat what they thought of as its magnificent social vision. Actually, as a careful reading makes clear, the central message of *The Grapes* is an appeal to the owning class to behave, to become enlightened, rather than to the working class to change its own condition. "Hungry men will take your land if you allow them to stay hungry," he says repeatedly; "Marx and Lenin are results, not causes." He summarizes:

> And the great owners, who must lose their land in an upheaval, the great owners with access to history, with eyes to read history and to know the great fact: when property accumulates in too few hands it is taken away. And that companion fact: when a majority of the people are hungry and cold they will take by force what they need. And the little screaming fact that sounds all through history: repression serves only to strengthen and knit the repressed.

He reminds them (as Dollfuss' supporters learned to their sorrow when Hitler moved in, after Dollfuss had broken up the Austrian workers' organizations and killed their leaders) that the workers are their strength, their defense:

> We could have saved you, but you cut us down, and soon you will be cut down and there'll be none of us to save you.

It has been remarked of the book that Ma is the most developed character and Casy probably the most significant, but that Tom automatically becomes the focus of the book, and that it disintegrates at the end when he leaves. The rather simple explanation for this is that Tom expresses Steinbeck himself.[8] With this in mind, it is interesting to note that Tom as a person has two distinct personalities, a public and a private one, the public one a cruel toughness that he displays to strangers (like the truckdriver who gives him his first ride, and the one-eyed junkyard attendant he insults) and the private one a surprising tenderness he displays to his family.[9] (This disposes of the contradiction that bothered some readers of *The Grapes* when it first appeared, the fact that Tom first appears in the book as anything but sympathetic.) It is worth noting that at the end, Tom's much vaunted "conversion" to labor agitation actually amounts to no more than a mystic identification with humanity, a watering-down of Debs's famous declaration of indentification with the oppressed, that he will "be" wherever there is starvation, militancy, or any emotion, and that when society is finally altered into a state where "our folks eat the stuff they raise and live in the houses they build," he will be there, too. Just how this new state will be achieved is never mentioned, although Steinbeck's own belief (at the time) seems to be in slow social evolution, expressed by Casy's statement that "ever' time they's a little step fo'ward, she may slip back a little, but she never slips clear back."[10]

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[8] There is a curious piece of evidence that Steinbeck identifies himself with Tom. One of the short stories in *The Long Valley,* a little sketch called "Breakfast" (dealing with a hospitable family, glowing with pride in having work, food, and a new baby, who offer breakfast to a stranger), is used again in *The Grapes.* As a story, it is in the first person, and the person commenting on it as a beautiful experience he once had is a person of some literacy, presumably Steinbeck. In *The Grapes,* it becomes an experience of Tom's, word for word, with only the philosophic comments omitted. Obviously, if Steinbeck feels enough similarity between his and Tom's attitudes to transfer an experience that seems to be his own to Tom, it is not unlikely that Tom can speak for him.

In "The Forgotten Village," the self-made movie that is Steinbeck's next work after *The Grapes of Wrath,* even these thin wisps of a "social" solution disappear. "The Village" emphasizes the ignorance of biology and preventive medicine that characterizes a Mexican village, shows how that ignorance may be remedied, implies that the young boy who has gone away to study will come back and remedy it, and quits for the day. It gives no hint of any necessity for social or economic change, no sense of any correlation between educational progress and social progress.

Sea of Cortez (the "leisurely journal of travel and research" written in collaboration with Edward F. Ricketts of the Pacific Biological Laboratories) at the end of this line, is markedly the least social of Steinbeck's books. (It is also, though perhaps for other reasons, his least commercially successful book since he became known.) For Steinbeck, the book is a literal rebirth in which he kills off all his remaining social compulsion and emerges into a perfect scientific vacuum. He himself makes the rebirth nature of the book quite clear, emphasizing constantly that the trip was a dreaming, a sleep, a death. ("We felt [on leaving] a little as though we were dying"; "the . . . water runs out of time very quickly, and a kind of dream sets in"; "answers which if faced realistically, would give rise to . . . a possible rebirth"; "the trip had been like a dreaming sleep.") On the trip, he looks back scornfully at the social ideas he once held, decides that the effect of any collective state would be to eliminate "the swift, the clever, and the intelligent," and substitute stepped-up reproduction ("replacement parts in a shoddy and mediocre machine") for any other achievement; recalls that "once we thought that the bridge between cultures might be through education, public health, good housing, and through political vehicles—democracy, Nazism, communism—but now it seems much simpler than that. . . ." He writes a final elegy to concepts of social progress:

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[9] In this connection, it would be useful to know who the people of the *The Grapes of Wrath* dedication are, the Carol who *willed* it, and the Tom who *lived* it.

[10] The suggestion that the workers use armed violence, or the threat of armed violence, made in *The Grapes* (in the story of the Akron rubber worker's "turkey shoot") is particularly curious, since even in Steinbeck's most "revolutionary" book, *In Dubious Battle,* the workers never consider armed resistance, and when they do capture guns they markedly fail to use them.

> Perhaps the pattern of struggle is so deeply imprinted in the genes of all life conceived in this benevolently hostile planet that the removal of obstacles automatically atrophies a survival drive. With warm water and abundant food, the animals may retire into a sterile sluggish happiness. This has certainly seemed true in man. . . . If these things are true in a biologic sense, what is to become of the warm fed protected citizenry of the ideal future state?

Once, in *In Dubious Battle,* Steinbeck felt that the man of science (the Doctor) had a responsibility at least to "help," and one of his pet resentments was against the doctor (who appears in *In Dubious Battle* and is mentioned again in the short story "The Raid") who refused to treat men because they were radicals. Once, in *The Grapes of Wrath,* he felt that the scientist had some sort of responsibility to the land, these men who were able to produce fertility and then saw it destroyed, burned, plowed under or thrown into the river, because of the economic system. Now he feels that the scientist's only responsibility (and it cannot be emphasized too strongly that "scientist" in *Sea of Cortez* means Steinbeck) is to the rigors of non-teleological thought and the comforting cynicism of ecological balance, and his only danger is that bogy of bogies, "the emotional content, the belief."

All through the book Steinbeck rationalizes the purpose of the trip ("the impulse which drives a man to poetry will send another man into the tide pools"; "it will enlarge the world picture"; "we search for . . . truth . . . understanding"). Finally he admits that the trip was simply pleasant, that it brought a freedom from the world, from "the fear and fierceness and contagion of war and economic uncertainty." "Here was no service to science, no naming of unknown animals," he admits at the end, "but rather—we simply liked it."[11]

Steinbeck admits that the trip (during the crucial spring of 1940, when Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium, and France fell to the Nazis) was a refuge from the war, from everything "modern" (that is, contemporary). He says:

> The world and the war had become remote to us; all the immediacies of our usual lives had slowed up. Far from welcoming a return, we rather resented going back to newspapers and telegrams and business. We had been drifting in some kind of dual world—a parallel realistic world; and the preoccupations of the world we came from, which are considered realistic, were to us filled with mental mirage. Modern economies; war drives; party affiliations and lines; hatreds, political and social and racial, cannot survive in dignity the perspective of distance.

In *Sea of Cortez* Steinbeck admits no slightest stake in the war, no trace of anti-Nazism. The war is simply "a zombie war of sleep-walkers"; war production is "men preparing thoughtlessly, like dead men, to destroy things." He gives his perspective: "Six thousand miles away the great bombs are falling on London and the stars are not moved thereby." He regards war as inevitable to mankind and as natural as eating or reproducing; "a murder trait . . . as regular and observable as our various sexual habits." He tries a mock-serious scientific statement:

> It is one diagnostic trait of *homo sapiens* that groups of individuals are periodically infected with a feverish nervousness which causes the individual to turn on and destroy, not only his own kind, but the works of his own kind. It is not known whether this be caused by a virus, some air-borne spore, or whether it be a species reaction to some meteorological stimulus as yet undetermined.

Not only are Steinbeck's views on war in *Sea of Cortez* those of the completely objective observer, with no stake in either side or any issues, but his scientific view of human behavior is not too far from justification of Nazism.[12] Typically he writes:

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[11] Like the old man in *To a God Unknown,* who tries rationalizing his sacrificing of animals to the sun, and finally admits that he does it simply because it makes him feel "glad," that he likes to do it.

[12] Some of the ideas and concepts expressed in *Sea of Cortez* are so sharply at variance with ideas and concepts in the earlier Steinbeck works as to raise the

> There is a strange duality in the human which makes for an ethical paradox. We have definitions of good qualities and of bad; not changing things, but generally considered good and bad throughout the ages and throughout the species. Of the good, we think always of wisdom, tolerance, kindliness, generosity, humility; and the qualities of cruelty, greed, self-interest, graspingness, and rapacity are universally considered undesirable. And yet in our structure of society, the so-called and considered good qualities are invariable concomitants of failure, while the bad ones are cornerstones of success. . . . In any animal other than man we would replace the term "good" with "weak survival quotient" and the term "bad" with "strong survival quotient." Thus, man in his thinking or reverie status admires the progression toward extinction, but in the unthinking stimulus which really activates him he tends toward survival.

If *Sea of Cortez* contradicts much of Steinbeck's earlier work, it is in almost shocking contrast to the next book, *The Moon Is Down. Sea of Cortez* was published in December of 1941. A few days after publication we went to war. Three months later, *The Moon Is Down* appeared, having all the appearance of what the trade calls a "quickie." *The Moon Is Down* marks a sudden and abrupt return to sociality, to a faith in the mass of people, but this time transcended to a higher level; out of the state of California, out of America (for the first time since the early scenes of his first novel, which are in Wales), out of the class struggle into the international struggle. This, then, is the reason for the play form. Like *Of Mice and Men, The Moon Is Down* is a pivotal work looking backward to the old beliefs (the scientist's isolation, lost to Steinbeck by our entry into the war) and forward to the new sociality (whatever it may turn out to be); containing within it the shell of the old as well as the seeds of the new. And just as the conquered people are the spokesmen for the new sociality, the Nazis are the spokesmen for Steinbeck's scientists! That, very simply, is why they make such half-hearted villains. They are not really Nazis at all, just Steinbeck's scientists disguised as Nazis, with the same disinterest in (not contempt for!) the people, the same "job to do" that fails to take human factors into account, the same ecological good sense ("four or five farms ought to be joined together"), the same biologist's approach to ethics and behavior in general.

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inevitable question whether they might not be Ricketts' ideas, only attributed to Steinbeck because of the editorial "we" in which the book is written. Obviously they might, but this does not explain why Steinbeck chooses to take responsibility for them with the covering "we," unless they coincide with his own beliefs.

That is why the book is so unconvincing; that is why the tone of reassurance that "free men can never be conquered" (they may lose battles, they may be slow, they may be unprepared and disarmed, but they will somehow win), is so hysterical; and that is why the book literally forced itself into dramatic form, facilitating the direct clash in dialogue of those two elements in Steinbeck's mind. The only problem here is that writing a book, even a short book that makes half a million dollars, requires some measure of conviction, and there is no evidence that Steinbeck has changed his mind about any of the things he believed in *Sea of Cortez*. In purely ecological terms (and Steinbeck has come forward flatly as a convinced and vocal ecologist), the Nazis ought to win, since their "survival quotient" is higher, and that would constitute an automatic ecological "justification" for their winning. And yet, despite ecology, the Nazis in *The Moon Is Down* are somehow defeated, are somehow to be unnerved, by a pure act of faith on Steinbeck's part (which, if it were not for his expressed contempt for all teleologies, might possibly be called teleological). It seems almost a shame that when fifteen years of effort, concentrated in ten books, have finally managed to cleanse Steinbeck of all taint of sociality, and he emerges in *Sea of Cortez* as the naked scientific mind, such an unexpected bionomic factor as the attack on Pearl Harbor should force him into a brand-new transition.

Whether in actual value the book will do more to inspire or to disarm the struggle against the Axis is still debatable. Unfortunately, the deeper compulsions that inspired it, the crucial dilemma in Steinbeck that came so near to resolution in *Sea of Cortez* and has now been forcibly reopened, have forced the book into a form where its effect will probably be somewhere along the line from the useless to the downright dangerous. No book that bases its hopes for the conquered peoples on such physical weapons as dynamite and chocolate, such mental weapons as sabotage so intelligent and inventive that it need never be organized, and such spiritual weapons as a God that is always on the side of the freer battalions, is likely to help in the war effort. Steinbeck may have finally managed, at the cost of great labor, to get his personal moon "down," and he may even (though the noticeable commercialism of the new book makes it highly unlikely) emerge from this book to greater and more directed writing than he has ever achieved, but in regard to this book, at least, the moon is so high up in the clouds as to be invisible.

MAX LERNER—ICEBREAKER

By DAVID W. PETEGORSKY

It is, of course, commonplace to observe that, with the exception of Thorstein Veblen and perhaps Henry George, America has produced few, if any, really great social thinkers. Of "grand political theory," as John Chamberlain has termed it, we have had virtually none. And in that respect, the progressive tradition is as poor as any other. That is not to suggest, let me hasten to add, that there are not to be found in the progressive tradition of this country names that would ennoble the intellectual annals of any land. Certainly men like Charles Beard in history, Vernon Parrington in literary history, J. Allen Smith in political science, Brandeis and Cardozo in law, John Dewey in philosophy, to mention but a few, stand in the very forefront of creative and original scholarship —by any standards. But few will deny that America has failed to produce a group of first-rate progressive theorists concerned not only with reinterpreting the past but with formulating strategy for the present and projecting the outlines of the future. There has not been in this country that union of great intellectuality and practical action that alone can produce significant progressive achievement. To appreciate that fact, one need but think, for example, of the role in England of the Webbs, Shaw, and Graham Wallas in their generation or of R. H. Tawney, H. N. Brailsford, Harold Laski, and G. D. H. Cole in the present.

To understand the comparative poverty of progressive thought in this country, one would have to probe deeply the interaction of several factors, which I can here do no more than enumerate. There has been, first of all, the control of the institutions of learning, directly or through a system of subtle pressures, by the representatives of corporate capitalism which generally made any excursion into radical thought, let alone radical activity, a highly dangerous adventure. And the experiences of Veblen, America's greatest social thinker, amply underscore that fact. There have been the canons of objectivity under which American scholars have generally worked; and they have shrunk from recognizing that in refusing to work with an explicit scheme of values or theoretical frame of reference, they were instead substituting some inarticulate major premises, none the less partial. There has been the disdain for theory and the theorists that has characterized the pattern of political activity in this country. There has been the influence of the pragmatic tradition in American life and thought. Above all, there have been the peculiar conditions of American social and economic development out of which, unlike Great Britain and the Continent, there has not grown any permanent and significant progressive movement with which intellectuals could actively identify themselves and in whose ranks they could serve.

Those factors may explain. They do not remedy. And today we require remedies far more than explanations. For we are in the midst of a revolutionary situation in which our traditional patterns of social relationships are being drastically transformed. The things we do today will largely determine the shape of things for many morrows to come. Progressive groups in this country are confronting that situation without an intellectual leadership that can give adequate direction to progressive action. Therein lies the potential tragedy of our situation. For, failing that leadership, we are abdicating our chances of winning the future in favor of those reactionary groups who not only understand the forces with which we must grapple but who equally appreciate the conditions of effective action.

II

During the past few years, Max Lerner has emerged as one of the most aggressive and articulate spokesmen of the liberal left in this country. As much as any progressive thinker and writer, he has been seeking to restore our faith in the possibilities of a democracy become dynamic; to impart to us confidence in our ability—given the will—to shape our future and to cast it in a progressive mold. His latest volume of essays,[1] embodying as it does most of his writing of the past three years, is as good a mirror as any we have of the present state of progressive thinking in this country. It is, as Lerner suggests, the record of one American's approach to the revolutionary events and forces of the present. And because it is the record of one of the leaders of radical thought, his volume admirably reveals both the strengths and weaknesses of the intellectual armory with which American progressives are attempting to conquer the future.[2]

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[1] *Ideas for the Ice Age.* The Viking Press, 1941.

III

Attempts to evaluate the significance of contemporary political thinkers in this country—and particularly those on the left—have partaken far too much of the nature of categorization. We label a thinker and we have done. Fortunately, none of the conventional labels will stick to Mr. Lerner. He has learned from many masters; but he can be claimed by none. Thus, he has received from Veblen a profound sense of the influence of technological change on social development, and particularly on institutional structure. From Marxist theory, he has taken something of the role of class division in history, the manner in which class interest and experience shape social thinking, and his occasional recognition that the state is not a neutral agency. For his toughmindedness and realism on the problem of means, he has gone back to Machiavelli. Freud and modern psychology have given him insight into the role of myths and symbols as techniques of mass manipulation. From his own studies of the crisis periods of American history that produced a Jackson, a Lincoln, a Wilson, a Franklin Roosevelt, he has fashioned his concept of democratic leadership that has been a particularly valuable contribution. He has been considerably impressed by the efficiency and dynamism of the totalitarian states. He has acquired a deep sense of the importance of traditional concepts in political allegiance. And from the native progressive tradition, he has inherited the tendency to shrink from the implications of his own analyses and to sidetrack the really basic issues in conflict.

From those various strands, Lerner has sought to weave a synthesized approach that he brings to bear on the social and historical phenomena he examines. It cannot be claimed for Lerner, let it at once be said, that he has achieved a fully integrated viewpoint which he applies with any high degree of consistency. One can discover in his writings frequent contradictions and, more particularly, shifts of emphasis so disproportionate as to amount to contradictions. I am inclined to agree with Sidney Hook who, in a critique of one of Lerner's earlier volumes, complained that the latter lacked "methodological sophistication." Yet Lerner can be forgiven that fault. For despite his lack of "methodological sophistication," possibly because of it, he has given us some of the most stimulating progressive writing of recent years. That is at least a relief from the pedantic sophistry into which much critical writing in this country has tended to degenerate.

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[2] I fully recognize the unfairness of any attempt to evaluate Mr. Lerner as a social theorist without giving adequate consideration to his two earlier volumes. But I am concerned primarily with his significance for the immedate present rather than with the judgment posterity will pass on him. I have therefore limited myself largely to his writings of the past three years as the record of his reaction to the urgent problems of the day.

Lerner's writings reveal his catholicity of interests; and his essays in this volume cover a broad range of themes. But his ventures as historian of ideas and events, as literary critic, as social theorist, are unified by a common purpose. For Lerner is concerned with scholarship and ideas not as ends in themselves but as instruments of social progress. In his studies of the great thinkers of the past, irrespective of whether tradition has labeled them authoritarian or libertarian, reactionary or radical, he is constantly seeking the progressive potential. Thus, when he writes of Machiavelli, he is interested not in reconstructing the latter's ideas in the context of his era but in taking from the Florentine those emphases that seem relevant to our own situation: the insistence that, in the crucial periods of history, we cannot be too squeamish about the means we employ; the sense of politics as a choice not between absolutes but between evils of varying degrees; the recognition that toughmindedness is an essential condition of survival. When Lerner studies American history, he is searching for instances in which the will of the majority has broken through the institutional restraints that privileged minorities had succeeded in erecting. When he analyzes the Presidency, it is to discover in our history and traditions the sanction for the kind of positive leadership we require today. When he thinks of Lincoln, it is for the purpose of fashioning a symbol for radical democracy that will carry the prestige of America's most evocative name. That technique occasionally causes Lerner to do something less than justice to the canons of scientific scholarship. I think here, for example, of that somewhat notorious essay on Lenin where he sought to make of the Bolshevik a social-democratic advocate of parliamentarianism. That, too, I suspect is why Lerner's contribution to pure scholarship has not been as extensive as it might otherwise have been. Here, of course, exception must immediately be made of his writings on legal sociology, on constitutional law, on judicial history. On those subjects, Lerner writes with a command of the materials and a craftsmanship in their handling which few have equalled; and he has brought to bear on the subject a freshness of approach which none has been able to match. In relating the development of constitutional law to the context of American economic change, in analyzing the subtle play of class forces that have shaped judicial and legal history and interpretation, Lerner has opened wholly new avenues to an understanding of one of the most vital areas of our history and literature.

A word should be said about Lerner's literary technique. I am certain that Mr. Lerner is impatient with those critics who repeatedly tell him that he writes brilliantly. For that is to suggest that his essays are more important as exercises in art than as adventures in thinking. But Lerner's literary craftsmanship is a fact of considerable political importance. Radical political writing in this country has suffered seriously from its inability to get away from the clichés and terminology that have been employed for decades. Those clichés not infrequently repel because of their association in the popular mind with political movements or systems of thought which, in earlier years and under other circumstances, most Americans rejected. And that aversion to the forms in which radical thinking has too frequently been cast has made for a rejection of its substance whatever its validity. It is therefore important that the left has thrown up a craftsman like Lerner. For people will digest in the freshness of his prose, ideas they would otherwise immediately refuse as unpalatable.

IV

As a social diagnostician, Lerner has based himself largely on the fact that the development of technology has created a revolutionary situation in the midst of which we are now caught. Old institutional forms have become incompatible with new social and economic realities; and those forms, as a result, have proved themselves increasingly unable to satisfy the demands of people everywhere. Technological progress has rendered our economic system immeasurably more complex than it has ever been. Collectivism and centralized planning have therefore become the major techniques by which the difficulties of economic organization can be mastered. The failure of private groups adequately to cope with the problems by which modern society is confronted and the deep-seated conflict of interests within every state and community have forced governments everywhere to assume increasing responsibilities. The need for more positive administration has precipitated serious constitutional and administrative crises; for our governmental institutions were originally designed in terms of the restraint rather than the exercise of power. It has therefore become necessary to create new social and governmental institutions endowed with power commensurate with their tasks.

The technological revolution and its impact on politics, on economics, on administration, have brought the specialists and the technicians to the fore; and their position in the social picture today is a central and decisive one. Technology has equally revolutionized the art of warfare; and it has wrought such interdependence between nations that only some form of world or regional federation can bring political relationships into harmony with economic and social realities.

The fascists have understood those revolutionary imperatives; and they have therefore been able to master them successfully. Thus, they proceeded to capitalize on the widespread discontent that the failure of existing social arrangements had fostered. Through the manipulation of myths and symbols, they were able to channelize that discontent into positive responses. Centralization and planning became the techniques by which they built their impressive efficiency. Aware that a revolutionary situation could be mastered neither with fears nor hesitations, they were prepared to act boldly in pursuit of their purposes. Their institutional structure was designed to facilitate the effective exercise of power. Fascist aggression was impelled not only by the need for resolving the inner social tensions of the fascist state. It was equally inspired by the recognition that social authority in the modern world had to be exercised over areas far larger than the traditional limits of the national state.

That, I believe, is a fair summary of Lerner's diagnosis of our contemporary crisis. The technological revolution gave birth to a series of social compulsives; it fashioned new techniques. And the fascists, displaying far more realism than the democratic forces, were quick to exploit the social situation for their own ends by directing those compulsives into reactionary channels.

What has been Lerner's great service, however, has been his insistence that both the compulsives and techniques that have grown out of the technological revolution are in themselves wholly neutral phenomena. Centralization of social authority, economic collectivism, expert administration, the trend toward international unification, are objective developments rooted in the scientific facts of our time; and it is useless to flee from them. But they can be made to serve progressive no less than reactionary ends. The purposes to which they will be dedicated, the manner in which they will operate, the content they will embody, will depend almost wholly on the balance of social and class forces within whose context they will function.

But if democrats are to turn those compulsives to progressive purposes, they must be prepared to employ the techniques by which alone those compulsives can be mastered. Democracy must become tough-minded, positive, dynamic. To the *élan* of an aggressive fascism, we must oppose the *élan* of a militant democracy; and we must counter the attractiveness of fascist promise with the persuasive power of democratic performance. Planning, centralization, positive government, aggressive leadership—none of these is the invention of the devil or the monopoly of the fascists. They are the results of the technological revolution through which we are passing; and their exercise is the fundamental condition of our survival.

That emphasis is a vital one. For too many progressives have been frightened by the impact of aggressive leadership or economic collectivism or positive government in the totalitarian regimes into a bad case of power phobia. They would, as a result, urge that democracy shun those techniques like the pestilence and arm itself with institutions powerless to cope with the realities of a revolutionary era. Lerner's insistence on the essentially neutral nature of those techniques and his refusal to judge means by any absolute or transcendent criteria have helped point the path to democratic survival.

V

The progressive movement in this country confronts at least three major problems: the clarification of the goals to which it aspires; the elaboration of the technical means by which a monopolistic capitalism operating on the basis of an economics of scarcity and for the benefit of a privileged minority can be transformed into a socialized society, functioning democratically and for the welfare of all; and, most important of all, the conquest of power. The significance of any intellectual for the progressive movement must be judged by the contribution he is making to those problems. On the basis of those criteria, what is Mr. Lerner's current contribution to progressive action?

Mr. Lerner certainly is aware of the problems. He has categorically rejected both the old liberal faith in the inevitability of progress and the crude determinism sometimes associated with Marxism which would make a clarification of the goals of progressive action a superfluous academic exercise. He is far too aware of the complexity of our social order to think that the purely technical problem of reshaping our institutions to give effect to new purposes can be a simple or secondary one. And he understands the class basis of our society well enough to know that a program without power will remain a pious wish.

In a general way, he has sought to indicate the answers to some of those problems. He has been urging, for example, that in order to give social institutions progressive content, we must increasingly move toward a democratic socialism. He has equally insisted that we must accept planning and collectivism as inevitabilities from which we cannot escape but that we can give those forms democratic meaning. Beyond that general emphasis, however, I do not find in Lerner's writings of the past three years a very clear or substantial picture of the ends toward which we must work. That is not to suggest that Lerner's emphases have not been of considerable importance. At a time when liberals are tending to turn their backs on collectivism because of the forms it has taken in the totalitarian states, Lerner's insistence on its progressive potential has been a vital one. But our fundamental problem today is that of developing institions which will build on the compulsive of collectivism but which will operate democratically and for the general welfare. And here neither good will nor noble intention will suffice. Nor is it enough to suggest that "the task will have to be done in a collectivist fashion, in the best sense of collectivism; pooling our social intelligence and our social courage and our social will"; or that "the job is to smash Nazism, carry through the civil wars against it wherever it has gained power, organize the world on a working economic basis, and carry through a social reconstruction which can keep with the people the essential decisions that affect their lives." For collectivism and the necessities of war are rapidly shaping the economic and social forms of the future. Unless we have a far more adequate picture of what should be the institutions and forms of a democratic collectivism, we may soon be confronted with a social system far more collectivist than democratic. Lerner is certainly conscious of the problem. In his essay on "The Administrative Revolution in America," he declares that, given the fact that government must now assume a major share of economic control, we must ask ourselves, "how and by whom shall the government be organized so as best to transact that business? And how can such a government be democratically controlled?" I shall return shortly to what I consider to be his unsatisfactory answer to the first question. After posing the second, however, he lapses into silence as to its solution. And that sin of omission and failure to give us a fuller picture of the forms democratic collectivism should take, as I shall later argue, may have dangerous consequences.

What about the second problem—that of formulating the technical means for transforming our society—of raising living standards, of distributing the social product, of controlling administrators? Here again, Lerner has written in terms of a general approach that has been a useful one. He has insisted that we must employ all the techniques of economic planning, the newest administrative processes, the greatest measure of expert knowledge and skill. But that again is more attitude than program; and it is a program that progressives desperately lack today. Lerner has outlined in a general way, as I have already suggested, the ends of progressive action. He has discussed in an equally general way some of the attitudes with which our problems must be tackled. But it is precisely that gap between will and achievement that must be bridged by a specific program. And to the elaboration of such a program for progressives, Lerner has added little. He frequently suggests, to be sure, the extension of New Deal techniques; but he has nowhere attempted to establish that those techniques can effect a significant transformation of our social order. Nor is it enough simply to urge that government must take over more social functions or that we must make fuller use of independent regulatory commissions or that we need "the type of planning which fits the administrative structure on the one hand to the economic structure and on the other to the federal and regional structure." For apart from their vagueness, Lerner knows well enough that those are neutral techniques. And in the absence of a more adequate definition of our goals and a more specific formulation of our means, those techniques can serve reactionary no less than progressive purposes.

The most unsatisfactory aspect of Lerner's thinking of the past few years, however, has been his refusal to confront the most fundamental problem of all: how to give power to those groups and classes which alone can effect the transformation whose urgency he recognizes. That, it cannot be emphasized often enough, is the basic problem of our day. For unless we can transfer social power to classes dedicated to a radical program of social reconstruction, the utmost precision as to our ends and the most detailed elaboration of our techniques will have been so much wasted energy. That problem Lerner either deftly avoids or meets with vague generalizatons. It may be that he has faith in the ability of the New Deal, both during the war and after, to carry through a program of radical social change. If so, Lerner would have to establish the fact that the New Deal has either effected any fundamental change in class relationships or gives promise of doing so. And given the present social and political basis of the New Deal, I suspect that establishing that fact would prove a rather difficult adventure even for a craftsman of Lerner's skill.

Nor can one accuse Lerner of resting his hopes for progressive change on the power of persuasion. For he has constantly emphasized that the acceptance of ideas is a function primarily neither of their logic nor desirability but of the class experience and interests and the psychological motivation of those who are being asked to act upon them. The idea does not triumph by its own unaided power and logic. To it must be joined the power of social classes dedicated to its enactment. And one finds it difficult to believe that Lerner expects the present classes in power to accept the kind of social system whose necessity he has been urging. He is probably aware of the fact that but a short time ago a New Deal administration refused labor an equal voice with industry in the organization of our economic war effort.

How, then, does Lerner hope to achieve democratic collectivism? What are the groups or classes on which he would build his bid for power? What is the strategy for action he proposes? Certainly he does not think revolution from the left a possible venture. "That revolution," he asserts, "missed fire. It had its chance on a world scale, and it may have its chance in another generation." But what are we going to do for a generation? And surely he must know that to mark time for such a period is to cede the battle to the forces of organized reaction.

I have searched Lerner's writings for the past few years for his answer to that question. I have failed to find any clear or satisfying assertion of his views. It is true that he suggests that the role of the intellectuals in social change "will be frustrate unless it is linked with revolutionary social energies in labor, in the professions, in responsible business groups, in science, in politics." But that is to say no more than that progressive change must be effected by progressive groups. Who these groups are, what classes they constitute, the forms of organization they must adopt, the strategy of action they will have to employ—on all of these, Lerner remains conspicuously silent.

Lerner's failure to grapple with those problems derives, I believe, from the fact that he has been influenced by the Veblenian far more than by the Marxist analysis. Both Marx and Veblen recognized technological progress as the fundamental fact in social development. But where Marx was concerned with the realignment of class forces that technological change produced, Veblen was mainly interested in its impact on institutional structure. Lerner has followed the Veblenian rather than the Marxist analysis. Throughout his writings, he is concerned with the effect of the technological revolution on social and political institutions rather than on the relationship of class forces within the state. That leads him, for all his breadth, to a mechanistic theory of social change in which institutional transformation that results from scientific progress rather than class conflict becomes the moving force in social development. Thus, whether he is writing of the administrative revolution in America or of the crisis state or of the principles by which we can own the future, his focal point is always the crisis in institutional arrangements, not in class relationships. Nowhere has he attempted an analysis of the changing nature of the class structure and of the implications of those changes for the strategy of political action.

That emphasis has caused Lerner to miss or to evade all the basic problems involved in the struggle for power. He is constantly envisaging the transforming of our society as an institutional rather than a class problem. His preoccupation with technology, too, has led to an unmistakable emphasis throughout his recent writings on the technicians as the major agents of social change. Indeed, that trend has become so pronounced in Lerner's writings and his failure to discuss the organization of the progressive forces for action so marked that one suspects that

Lerner has not been altogether uninfluenced by the managerial revolution thesis of the Burnhamians.[3] If there is any single positive trend in Lerner's thinking today, it is toward a managerial society. In this connection, it is interesting to note Lerner's assertion that "the technicians are, to be sure, in control in Germany." Franz Neumann's definitive work[4] on the dynamics of the Nazi regime must have made it clear to Mr. Lerner that he erred somewhat in his estimate of the power of the technicians in Hitler's Reich.

It would be unfair to suggest that Lerner is wholly unaware of the problem of power. Occasionally he asserts that class forces and interests are frustrating social advance; that the state is not a neutral agency but a class instrument; that we must act to transfer power from reactionary to progressive classes. But those recognitions are by no means central to his recent thinking. Nor has he attempted to carry through their implications to their logical conclusions or to analyze the means through which that transfer of power can be achieved.

I do not know whether Lerner has refrained from pressing those issues because he feels that the implications of some of his analysis would constitute a stronger dose than most Americans are ready for. If so, he is failing to fulfil the demands of intellectual leadership for which Lerner likes to think of himself as toughminded. Frankly, I don't know what his toughmindedness consists of—unless it be the recognition that we must be toughminded to survive. For he is failing to grapple with the toughest problem of all—the conquest of power by progressive classes.

Nor can Lerner reply that no writer can concern himself with all the difficulties by which we are confronted, and that he is concentrating his energies. For it is the first requisite of leadership—intellectual no less than practical—to distinguish between the relevant and the less relevant. Lerner's emphases in the past have been of vital importance. But they have begun to reach the point of diminishing returns. Some years ago, our problems were mainly those of an analysis of capitalism in contraction. Today, our analyses are full and adequate enough. Marx, Veblen, and the host of writers who have expanded their insights, not least among whom has been Lerner himself, have given us ample materials on which to build. Today the major tasks confronting progressive intellectuals are the clarification of our goals, the formulation of technical means, an analysis of the strategy of organization for action. Lerner's writings of the past few years do not reveal that he has been concerning himself in adequate measure with those problems. As a result, the Lerner who a few years ago was in the van of progressive thought has now dropped back to the swim.

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[3] For a critical discussion of this thesis see: Paul M. Sweezy, "The Illusion of the 'Managerial Revolution'," *Science and Society,* Winter, 1942; and J. D. Kingsley and D. W. Petegorsky, *Strategy for Democracy* (Longmans, Green, 1942), Chapter xiv.

[4] *Behemoth: The Structure and Practice of National Socialism,* Oxford University Press, 1942.

Nor is Lerner's present position without its dangers. In an earlier volume, he declared that a philosophy without a strategy is powerless. Lerner's philosophy without a strategy is worse than powerless. It is dangerous. There is, as I have already suggested, a marked tendency in Lerner to accept the thesis of a managerial society—a social order in which we shall depend for progress on the benevolence of experts unfettered by any adequate forms of popular control. But the chief danger of his position lies in another direction. Lerner has been eloquently emphasizing the inevitability of collectivism, of planning, of centralization. He has taught us to have no fears of the positive state, of dynamic leadership, of the exercise of power. Coupled with a strategy for progressive action, that conditioning process in which Lerner has been so important a factor can be a vital one. Divorced from any program for the implementation of progressive purposes, as Lerner has divorced it, a general recognition of the neutral nature of those processes may have dangerous consequences. For it may well be exploited by reaction for antidemocratic purposes. In Europe, the left, far more than the right, conditioned people everywhere to an acceptance of the idea of the positive state, of governmental control, of centralized planning. But because the progressives proved so ineffectual in implementing their programs, reaction was able to capitalize on the propaganda of the left to instal itself in power. Unless progressives concern themselves far more seriously with the problem of power and couple a program for its conquest with their analyses, emphases such as Lerner's may ultimately play a similar role here.

VI

I suggested at the outset of this paper that the poverty of progressive thought in this country derived, in large measure, from the divorce between theory and practical action, from the fact that progressive intellectuals had no dynamic political organization with which they could actively affiliate themselves. That identification is indispensable to intellectual development no less than to effective practical action. For social theory can have incisiveness and meaning only when it is intimately related to the problems of action; and political action can be effective only when it is shaped by an adequate understanding of the forces in conflict in society. Only a Marx or a Veblen could transcend the limitations of social isolation. And one can hardly discern a Marx or a Veblen on the horizon of social theory in America today.

That is basically Lerner's dilemma—as it is of progressive thinkers generally. It is significant that most of the pieces in Lerner's present volume first appeared in the pages of the liberal weeklies. Lerner both reflects and shares their weaknesses—and those are the weaknesses of the progressive movement in this country today: the divorce from the vital progressive forces in our society; their concern with peripheral rather than with central problems; their refusal to confront the fundamental issue of social power. Certainly, Lerner has pleaded eloquently that the walls of the ivory tower be razed; that the intellectuals achieve a closer identification with the day-to-day problems of our society; that they become an integral part of larger and dynamic social classes. But his volume is evidence of the fact that that identification has not yet been achieved.

Lerner has suggested that the left may have its chance in another generation. We may indeed, as he believes, be headed for an ice age. Actually, however, that chance has come far sooner than Lerner thinks. The impact of events has set in motion potentially powerful progressive forces. Everywhere large numbers of people, fully conscious of the failure of existing institutions, are earnestly searching for a vital progressive program which can give them a future. Those forces can be crystallized into a progressive movement which can really capture the future. But if the intellectuals like Mr. Lerner are to share in that adventure, they will have to realize that the vast bulk of an iceberg really lies beneath the surface. They will have to shift their analyses from the periphery to the center, to dig deeper into what are the really fundamental problems of our revolutionary era.

THE BALKANS AND THE NEW EUROPE

By ALBERT VITON

THE BALKAN PROBLEM is bound to loom large in all democratic discussions of the new world that is to be constructed after the defeat of the fascist aggressors. It is not only that the lives of some eighty million human beings are at stake; no less important, Europe—and therefore the world—will not know peace until the southeast corner of the continent is rehabilitated and reconstructed. A chaotic Balkans torn by permanent rivalries is a powder keg which the world can no longer afford. On the other hand a strong, contented, and pacific Balkans could fulfil an invaluable function in preventing the development of imperialist ambitions on the part of Germany in the future.

Let this be clear: Germany is bound to be a great power and a potential menace whatever the peace settlement. The inescapable and ultimately decisive facts are that there are about eighty million Germans in central Europe; that they are among the most highly developed and most energetic peoples of the world; that they have constructed one of the world's greatest industrial machines, which can be turned to military ends at very short notice. One way to break Germany's potential powers of aggression would be to transport forty to fifty million Teutons to distant corners of the world—a solution so absurd that it does not even deserve discussion. The only other solution of the German problem is to create conditions of general world security buttressed by blocs on the Reich's frontiers sufficiently powerful to check German militarist manifestations.

German aggression has traditionally begun in southeastern Europe. Prussia rose to greatness by defeating Austria; later southeastern Europe was gradually reduced to the position of an economic appendage to Berlin and William II developed his *Drang nach Osten* policy. In this respect at least Hitler proved no more than a faithful follower. And inevitably so. The petty rival states offered ideal opportunities for the Reich to rise to greatness on the misery of others by use of the ancient divide-and-rule method. Inherent Balkan rivalries were unscrupulously but only too well exploited to enhance German diplomatic prestige and power. Hitler cajoled the weak states in the Balkans into significant economic concessions by playing off one against another; and construction of the mighty Nazi military machine would have been much more difficult without the economic agreements concluded during 1934-39. It was in the east that the western democracies were undermined.

Two impediments have stood in the way of all efforts to pacify the troubled Balkans. First there has been the problem of the numerous national minorities. Not much need be said about the pre-1914 aspect of this problem. The Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires which dominated more than a dozen national groups were hotbeds of intrigue, seething with discontent and treachery; the survival of those empires turned southeastern Europe into a live volcano subject to periodic eruptions. The peace treaties at the end of the last war did much—more than is generally recognized—to remedy those age-old injustices. Minor improvements could no doubt have been made in the 1919-20 treaties; slight changes in the frontiers of the new Hungary and Bulgaria would have removed a few conspicuous grievances and sources of discontent: but it is a fatal error to overlook the fact that, under the then unchallenged system of sovereign national states, the treaties of Trianon and Neuilly marked an unprecedented step toward solution of the nationalities problem and pacification of the Balkans.

Yet it was not long before it became obvious that neither the new frontiers nor the League of Nations would bring peace to that troubled area. Each one of the postwar states, whether in the victorious or vanquished camps, emerged saddled with minority problems; the protection of the League proved ineffective and illusory. Not that the new states were imbued with a wicked determination to oppress the minorities: it is necessary to emphasize that the type of autonomy demanded by the latter created serious difficulties and may well have been inherently incompatible with the security of the states. The problem was inherently insoluble under the prevailing political system. Centralized sovereign states and autonomous groups are fundamentally incompatible; and no amount of good will could reconcile the irreconcilable.

Almost as important was the economic problem. A certain amount of economic unity had existed in the Balkans before 1914. The Austro-

Hungarian empire imposed a kind of oppressive unity on its dominions: the independent Slavic states were too poor and backward to strike out on economic careers of their own; all were dependent on outside capital for their development. They were content to produce agricultural goods and some industrial raw materials for the markets of the highly industrialized western part of the continent: Germany, Britain, and the industrialized sections of the Austrian empire, notably Vienna and Bohemia, produced nearly all the industrial goods consumed south and east of the Danube. Fundamental changes, however, took place after the outbreak of the last world war and especially after 1920. The unity of the Austrian empire ceased to exist; new states were created; and it was not long before each one of the states began using its enhanced and strengthened political independence for economic ends. The war had stimulated certain amounts of local industrialization; after the return to peace rapid industrialization emerged as a compelling ideal, to the realization of which the whole state apparatus was directed. Tariff and currency wars became the order of the day almost as soon as hostilities ceased. The meaning of financial independence was learned only too well by all.

The result can be described by one word: chaos. Under the stimulus of state protection and financial aid, simple industries, like textile manufacturing, footwear, furniture, and simple household utensils, developed in all the countries, and those industries more or less competed with one another; on the other hand many industries which required large markets and great financial outlays did not come into being, although there was no lack of raw materials. Competition in agricultural products proved especially disastrous. Germany, the largest market for all the Balkans, was able to play each state against the others to the ultimate destruction of all; prices fell to disastrous depths; there was no end to recriminatory manipulations; all competed for the Italian and other foreign markets; no unified agricultural policy, either in production or in marketing, was possible.

I

A new approach is necessary if southeastern Europe is to be rehabilitated after the present war. One thing at least emerges from the history of the past twenty years: the Balkan problem cannot possibly be solved by the traditional methods. The postwar treaties were almost as perfect a settlement along the accepted traditional lines as was humanly possible; but the events of the past years stand as final proof of the inadequacy of that settlement. Nor will the Hitler rearrangement, if allowed to stand, bring peace to that troubled area; indeed the new arrangement contains vastly greater injustices than those effected in 1919-20. The dismemberment of Yugoslavia and Rumania, the disruption of Greece were not calculated to redress just grievances but to further German imperialist ends. Croatia is not and never can be an independent state; and no one knows that better than the fascist rulers. Economically and politically an independent Croatia must be a vassal of Italy; culturally it must hang in a vacuum. Hungary's reannexation of Ruthenia and Transylvania is an injustice that cries to heaven. Transylvanians may have had little love for the corrupt, inefficient Rumanian potentates who descended like locusts after 1920; on the other hand, the overwhelming majority detest the haughty and tyrannical Hungarian overlords, and they have no sympathy with the temper of Hungarian cultural life.

Fortunately there is one solution which has not yet been tried and which may contain a real promise for success. There is the democratic approach to the problem. President Wilson hoped to implement a democratic solution at the end of the last war: he strove valiantly not only to establish regimes bearing a democratic appearance, but to create conditions which would make possible permanent democratic institutions. This is not the place to trace the fate of his efforts; suffice it to say that the regimes which emerged were anything but democratic. The time has now arrived for planning a solution which would implement the Wilsonian promise. Only a democratic solution can bring peace and progress to that much-suffering section of the world.

What should be done? Self-determination, so loudly proclaimed by democratic statesmen at the end of the last World War, must be made the cornerstone of the new structure. Self-determination must be made a living reality. There will be no peace, there will be no stability and no security until all peoples without exception are given unconditional, unlimited, and unhindered freedom to choose their political fate. This is the *sine qua non* of a durable and satisfactory settlement. Plebiscites must be held in all disputed and mixed areas to give the local population the opportunity to determine whether it prefers to be part of one or another of the prewar states or whether it wants autonomy. Such plebiscites should be held in Transylvania, Slovakia, Ruthenia, Upper Silesia, Dobruja, Tyrol, Croatia, Slovenia, Sudentenland, and in some border areas. They should be held a year or two after conclusion of hostilities; and until a definite settlement is reached the disputed areas should be governed by foreign chief administrators appointed by the Allied Peace Commission. Special precautions will of course be necessary to insure free expression. Fortunately we have had sufficient experience with plebiscites to enable us to make them really effective.

The results of such plebiscites are a foregone conclusion. Perhaps as many as eight areas which until 1940 were part of one or another Balkan state will ask for independence or autonomy. Borders should be drawn as strictly as possible according to the expressed wish of the population; neither strategic nor alleged economic considerations should be taken into consideration. Small minority groups will continue to exist in the various territories. I do not think that minorities are avoidable in the arabesque Balkan pattern of cultural, racial, and linguistic communities, and special arrangements will be necessary to safeguard their legitimate interests. But those minorities, instead of being, as hitherto, forces of discord, can be turned into a tower of strength and a bond of union. Only exchanges of populations on a gigantic scale could do away with minorities, and that would not be possible nor even desirable.

II

Will not the proposed solution result in the emergence of new autonomous states and the further Balkanization of the Balkans? It will. There may be as many as fifteen autonomous territories where only seven existed before 1939. This may be regrettable, but it is unavoidable if any measure of peace is to be secured in that torn section of Europe. For Transylvania, to cite one example, is neither Hungarian nor Rumanian. It contains peoples of both nations; but it has a character of its own which demands recognition. The same thing holds true of the other territories. Self-determination is the only democratic alternative to imperialism; and the bankruptcy of the latter has been amply demonstrated by recent events.

If further Balkanization of the Balkans is the inevitable first step toward a lasting solution, it is certain that it will not by itself solve the problem. The necessary and indispensable next step must be federalization. Far-reaching measures in this direction have recently been taken by the exiled governments in London; much more will have to be done before a Balkan federation can become a reality. The difficulties should not be underestimated; they should be, on the contrary, studied carefully by special commissions composed of Balkan and Western experts, who should be entrusted with the task of working out detailed and concrete solutions. The objective impediments must be recognized and dealt with: they cannot be conjured and the time for studying those complicated problems is now. It is imperative that we be ready the moment victory is won with a concrete plan to be put into operation, lest that part of the continent be overwhelmed by the flood of chaos and terror which the Nazis have been preparing. It is necessary to recognize, first, that at present the Balkan states constitute anything but an economic unit; only about fifteen per cent of the foreign trade of the various states is with Balkan countries. Communications systems will have to be reconstructed to further federalization; at present the main lines are planned to connect the various states with the outside world rather than to facilitate inter-Balkan relations. It is highly significant that no direct railway connection between Bulgaria and Greece was built during the twenty years between the two world wars, while direct rail connection between the other states is exceedingly poor. Hardly less noticeable is the lack of inter-Balkan road connections. The main road arteries follow the chief railway lines and are constructed to direct traffic outward rather than to facilitate internal communication.

Nor are the cultural diversities, the differences in legal systems, the varieties in educational ideals and standards calculated to facilitate union. It is not generally realized in the West how little contact there has been between Balkan capitals and between Balkan peoples, how carefully the schools have furthered animosities and jealousies, how insignificant has been inter-Balkan tourist travel, although southeastern Europe contains some of the most beautiful scenery to be found on the continent. Only the schools of Czechoslovakia consciously endeavored to dispel old animosities. A Balkan businessman or teacher or writer would no more think of spending his vacation in a neighboring country than he would think of going to Brazil; France and Germany have been the traditional tourist magnets. And the differences have been intentionally furthered and have become more pronounced during the past half century. The history of personal law offers a good example of the general trend. Although the legal systems of all Balkan countries are based on Roman Law modified by common Byzantine and Ottoman experience, modern legislation has definitely aimed to break the ancient unity. Now it will be necessary to form commissions to join again the disjointed parts.

The difficulties in the way of federalization are immense and deeply rooted in historical tradition. They cannot be abolished with a stroke of the pen. Yet the obstacles are not insurmountable. Most leaders of progressive, democratic popular parties in the various Balkan countries have agreed that federation is possible; that, above all, it is a historical necessity and must be realized in spite of the difficulties and obstacles.

The minority problem has been, no doubt, the most serious bar to a permanent understanding; and solution of this problem is a *sine qua non* before there can be the slightest basis for Balkan peace. But the solution suggested in these pages, along the lines of democratic self-determination and cultural autonomy, would unquestionably constitute a definitive remedy, more acceptable now than at any previous time. Such small minorities as would remain in all the autonomous provinces would no longer be a problem and could be given wide cultural autonomy. For one thing, the numbers involved would be very small and they would not be able to constitute a threat to the majority groups; for another thing, federation would change the very essence of the political system and annihilate the myth of sovereignity. Moreover, each majority group would have, so to speak, hostages amidst the other groups, and federation would give each one a tribune for airing grievances against mistreatment of its kin in any territory. Interestingly enough, the value of at least the first part of the proposed solution was realized by Premier Stambulisky, the "Peasant Dictator" of Bulgaria, as early as 1922, to mention only the most famous of its early advocates. "The Balkan peoples," he wrote, "have a great desire for peace and understanding. . . . Democracy has grown and continues to grow in all Balkan countries. This is a guarantee of their bright future. . . . What should be done for the establishment of an enduring peace? Very little: first, self-determination for the inhabitants in the contested territories. . . ." And at the Lausanne Conference in the same year Stambulisky pointed out that "the best and fairest" solution of the problem of western Thrace would have been to constitute it "as an autonomous region . . . since it would have assured liberty of existence to all the elements which make up the population . . . not one of which forms by itself a really important majority." The solution suggested by that far-seeing statesman for Thrace is applicable to all other contested regions; and precisely for the same reason.

III

Two other factors have contributed to the perpetuation of chaotic political conditions in the Balkans, and it is imperative that the democratic peacemakers deal with them in a realistic manner. First, much of the responsibility for the failure of all past efforts at conciliation and federation must be attributed directly to the reigning dynasties. Second, the social structure of all the states will have to be radically transformed before a great political advance can be possible.

"The general tendency of history," wrote E. A. Freeman, the historian of federalism in the ancient world, "is to show that, though a monarchical federation is by no means theoretically impossible, yet a republican federation is far more likely to exist as a permanent and flourishing system." Balkan experience during the past few decades justifies this generalization. The Balkan monarchies are torn by mutual jealousies, hatreds, and suspicions; all fancy that they have the old scores to settle and ancient wrongs to avenge; and these dynastic quarrels have been responsible for a great deal of the friction, as well as for a number of bloody wars, between the Balkan states. Very little love has traditionally been lost between the the Karageorgevitch house of Serbia and the Saxe-Coburg dynasty in Bulgaria, which was usually not averse to seeing the descendants of Black George come on evil days. Nor have relations between the Bulgarian dynasty and the Hohenzollerns of Rumania been much better. Carol has been known to express himself rather warmly about his Germanic "cousin." As to the attitude of the Hapsburgs—who still have claims on the throne of Hungary—to the other Balkan princes, the less said the better.

All the dynasties have interests which are inevitably vested in separation; all have also long memories. Inevitably so. The whole justification for their existence usually lies in the historical past; not one of them could possibly play a useful role in a united Balkan political organization. Would the kings become hereditary governors of provinces, taking orders in matters of defense, finance, and foreign relations from a democratically elected outside authority? One need only pose this suggestion to recognize its absurdity. Realistic observers in the Balkans have always maintained that peace and federation are incompatible with the survival of the ruling houses. "A monarchical or semi-republican Balkan confederation must either be transformed into a despotic Balkan empire or go to pieces in a civil war," observed Dr. Geshkoff of Bulgaria.

Fortunately, the dynastic problem is far from insoluble. Balkan peasants and the middle class, unlike their counterparts in Britain and Germany, have never had much respect for the pomp and heroics of the various courts. A peculiar realism and cynicism—much of it a legacy of the Turkish past—has tended to make the common man cynical of all government and especially of the pretensions of potentates. Hence the frequent anti-palace revolutions in all these countries. The prestige of the kings is now lower than ever. Only Peter of Yugoslavia is likely to come out of the war with an unscathed reputation. The greatest danger at present lies not in the strength of the native monarchical forces, but in the attitude of the western democracies, and especially in that of Britain. Left to themselves, the Balkan countries would unquestionably rid themselves of their royal families; the danger is that the kings may attempt to re-establish their authority with the aid of foreign powers. All will depend on the policy of Great Britain and this country, and it is important that people in this country should realize what stakes are involved. A clear and firm policy on the part of the United States in favor of republican regimes in the Balkans would be welcomed by the overwhelming majority of the native peoples, and would contribute greatly to the stabilization and pacification of that troubled part of Europe.

It would be fatal, secondly, to overlook the social and economic conflicts within native society. The Balkan social structure follows lines of crystalization of its own—or rather, lines of crystalization which are to be found in almost all contemporary pre-industrial, semi-capitalistic, predominantly agricultural countries. The three-class structure of the Marxist system, whatever its validity for Western industrial society, is simply inapplicable to these societies. The struggle in these lands is between the peasantry—illiterate, shockingly poor, superstitious, pre-industrial in its culture and economy, animated by a tremendous land-hunger and a desire for progress—and a peculiar "upper class" composed of feudal landlords, reckless adventurers, financial shysters, lawyers, lucky gamblers for high stakes, military officers who became generals more by intrigue than by industry or knowledge, and all sorts of wire-pullers, speculators, and men connected in one way or another with high-class courtesans. This latter, broadly, is the class that has wielded state power in all Balkan countries.

It is impossible to understand the political developments of the past score of years unless the peculiar character of the Balkan ruling classes is constantly borne in mind. The politicians and statesmen that have fluttered across the political stage cannot with very few exceptions, be called representative of the people by any stretch of the imagination. Some, of course, were of peasant origin; but all ties binding them to their class were quickly clipped in their meteoric rise to power—and nowhere do men rise so high and fall so low so quickly as in the lands once dominated by the Turks. Again with a few honorable exceptions, Balkan politicians have been adventurers in the truest sense of the word, partaking of all the lust for power, money, noisy excitement and vulgar but expensive pleasures characteristic of successful adventurers. It is easy to see how the interests of this peculiar class, which has always allied itself with foreign capital in search for easy profits and with the Parisian political demimonde, should have been inexorably bound with the preservation of old conflicts, territorial squabbles, and chauvinistic nationalism. Those conflicts enabled them to divert popular attention from the immense and basic economic problems confronting that part of the world.

I know of no way to emphasize sufficiently the peculiar nature of the class conflict in the Balkan (and Near Eastern) countries and the immense, constant, and tragic influence on the international relations of these lands which the "educated" upper classes, who have a monopoly of "Western culture," have exercised. This factor has been overlooked by most Western writers, who unfortunately have little personal knowledge of local conditions and less political insight. The ruling classes in these countries are frequently called feudal; but that is a fundamental misnomer. They have neither the traditions nor ancient lineage of the landowning classes in Germany or Britain; they have no "houses" the honor of which they feel bound to uphold and to preserve. The overwhelming majority of Balkan politicians have been clever, unscrupulous adventurers; and nothing more than that. They have stifled as cruelly as they could popular demands for reform, for unity, and for international peace; they have exploited and oppressed their countrymen; they have speculated with the peace and welfare of their countries and sold themselves and their countries to the highest bidder on the international political markets. That is why neither Germany, nor Italy, nor any other aggressor nation, however opposed to the true interests of the various Balkan lands, has ever found it difficult to obtain Quislings and other lackeys in the so-called "highest quarters."

Not until the peasantry, constituting roughly about eighty per cent of the population, and the laboring and weak middle classes come into their own will it be possible to solve the old political problems and to bring peace to that troubled section of the world. It is on these groups that the political edifice of the future must be built. The peasants, especially, want peace—and land. I have trekked over the Balkan countryside and spoken with hundreds of peasants, and I have rarely found anything more than the faintest echoes of the fiery slogans that are heard in ministerial and parliamentary chambers. My experience has been that it is more difficult to get a Drobujan peasant excited over the prospect of return to Bulgaria than Ferdinand the Bull over the sight of a red flag.

Unfortunately, these classes have been until now politically impotent; their voice rarely made itself heard; and I much fear that they will remain impotent unless aided by the victorious democracies. It is imperative that the Western democracies shape a political and economic policy with a view to helping these classes to come into their own. Financial aid will be necessary to raise their economic and cultural level; they will undoubtedly need technical and administrative help; above all, the victorious democracies should deal only with democratically elected representatives. Few people in the West realize that in Hungary the suffrage is still restricted to a very small section of the population and that open voting is still the practice; in the other countries, democratic processes have been defeated by other devices.

The task confronting the democracies is not an easy one. There is no simple panacea for healing the wounds of the old Continent. Boundary shifts will certainly not do it; even complex political changes, such as federation, will not by themselves be sufficient to bring peace to that strategic part of the world. Much will depend, of course, on the kind of political settlement that will be devised; and I believe that nothing less than a judicious and sagacious combination of federalization and autonomy—of the centrifugal and centripetal political forces—contains even the slightest promise of peace. But political changes alone will prove woefully inadequate. Unless buttressed and constantly invigorated by a process of economic and social development, time will corrode the political structure instead of strengthening it. Careful and costly provisions will have to be made to change the social, economic, financial, and cultural structure; new ways will have to be found for financing major development projects, the old system of international finance having broken down irretrievably; but the most expensive peace, experience should teach us, is cheap indeed, even in the barest monetary terms, compared with the cheapest of modern wars.

Above all, the settlement proposed in these pages would probably have the support of Soviet Russia. Most British and American discussions of the peace settlement are conveniently overlooking the fact that Russia is now bound to have a powerful voice in the next peace conference; there has also been a tendency to forget that Russia has been interested in southeastern Europe since the middle of the last century. Fortunately, Russia does not seem to have imperialist territorial ambitions: she is not likely to demand vast territorial annexations if the Western democracies produce a program that will assure a strong, contented, and peaceful Balkans, in which Russia is interested both as the traditional champion of the "little Slav brothers" and as a bulwark against Germany, and will hold out the promise of a better life for the millions of downtrodden and exploited farmers and laborers. On the other hand, Russia is almost certain to attempt spreading her suzerainty over the Balkans if the English-speaking Powers come to the peace conference with no program but the restoration of the *status quo ante*.

AN ECONOMIC POLICY TO INSURE PERMANENT FULL EMPLOYMENT

By JOHN H. G. PIERSON

A PLAN for winning the peace would help to win the war, for it would foster morale. A nation's fighting power depends on its faith in the future.

Without much doubt the peace aim of most Americans, if it could be articulated, would be to establish guaranteed full employment in the United States, while at the same time strengthening democracy and promoting effective, nonwasteful use of man power and other resources. How can this aim be realized?

Consideration is asked for the following suggestions. The compressed form in which they are set down here is prompted not by dogmatism but rather by a desire to save the reader's time.[1] The reader in turn is asked, as he proceeds, to bear two things in mind. These proposals are intended as related parts of an over-all economic policy—for piecemeal adjustment here and there is not what the postwar situation will require. Secondly, the proposals assume that the people's elected representatives should lay down the guiding rules, and should change them from time to time to meet changing conditions, but then abstain from constantly usurping administrative functions.

* * *

It should be the policy of the United States government to establish guaranteed full employment—a state of affairs in which all men and women willing and able to work will always have the opportunity to do so, at prevailing rates of pay and under prevailing hourly specifications and working conditions generally.

Stop there for a moment. What is full employment?

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[1] Economic analysis on which these suggestions are based was presented by the author in *Full Employment,* Yale University Press, 1941.

Full employment as referred to herein means employment of all except (a) unemployables and (b) a normal quota temporarily idle because of shifts in demand, technological progress, or any other form of frictional (i.e., transitional) unemployment. Unemployability should be determined objectively, by medical test, in a manner subject to popular control. This is not to suggest that unemployables, so defined, should not have a perfect right to find work if they can, but rather merely to delimit one of the fields where special assistance is needed and to indicate when involuntary idleness should not affect the unemployment figures. The amount of unemployment designated as the normal quota of frictional unemployment (which may vary seasonally) should be decided democratically; expert opinion should be taken and the final decision should be reached in a manner giving an adequate voice to labor and to all other sections of the population.

These observations in turn point to the need for two further preliminary comments. In the first place, the definition of unemployability herein advocated may create a situation in which the work of some employables is not worth, in terms of value added to product, no matter where they may be employed, as much as minimum wage laws of the United States require that they be paid; in that case, the difference between what they are deemed to be worth when most effectively employed and the minimum legal rates should be a charge on the general economy, to be met out of taxation. In the second place, to assure that prevailing rates of pay, hours, and working conditions shall be decided democratically, collective bargaining and the right to strike should be fully supported by the government.

So much by way of defining full employment. But there are other main objectives as well. The measures taken to support full employment should be such as require the least sacrifice of other desired ends. Not only must democracy be preserved and strengthened, but in addition full employment should not conflict with effective use of resources.

To secure a truly effective use of man power and other resources, as judged by the success with which these factors are applied to satisfying the wants and needs of the people, planned public enterprise (i.e., production of a socially planned quota of the specified goods and services, whether for sale or for free distribution) is required in some cases. In other cases production is best left to private enterprise producing to order or to meet an anticipated market demand. In still other instances a compromise solution may be most serviceable; for example, joint councils representing management and labor in a given industry may practice some aspects of production planning with approval and collaboration of government, government representatives may sit on boards of directors, and so forth.

In order to promote private enterprise and limit government intervention in economic matters to the necessary minimum, it should in general be the policy of the government to secure full employment by the method of ***underwriting the aggregate amount of consumer expenditure and preventing monopoly price exactions*** (as hereinafter noted), thus encouraging private employment.

In each specific case where socially planned and organized production may be urged as a substitute for private enterprise, the burden of proof should be on the proponents of public planned production to demonstrate that that procedure would be superior to free or regulated private enterprise.

However, where competition cannot function and regulation of private monopoly or of associated private producers has proved to be unsatisfactory, other methods are obviously required. Wherever the superiority of public planned production—measured against existing practice and against what might be brought about by constructive technical innovations—appears at any time to be established beyond a reasonable doubt, public planned production should be instituted.

In addition, as a second and final line of defense against unemployment (the first line being the guarantee applied to total consumer demand, together with control of monopolies), a planned program of federal, state, and local emergency public projects should be maintained as a regular part of the nation's economic apparatus, and employment thereon should be expanded and contracted as may be required to keep the total number of jobs adjusted to the labor supply.

Insofar as private construction continues to be peculiarly subject to fluctuation in spite of stability in the market for ordinary consumer goods, construction projects (i.e., durable public works) will tend to preponderate in this emergency program. Conservation offers another great field for expansible public employment. However, a sufficiently wide range of projects of all types should be planned in advance so that a selection can always be made that will fit the kinds or skills of labor currently available, whatever they may be and wherever located.

Compensation to labor on emergency public projects should be at rates prevailing in private and nonemergency public work.

Come back now to private enterprise. Contrary to the view formerly held by most economists, prices are not flexible enough to keep the volume of production and employment in the field of private enterprise from contracting when anything happens to check the circulation of money around the production-consumption circuit. Moreover the circulation of money does not maintain itself automatically. It is therefore fundamental to a full-employment program that government take steps to maintain the monetary circulation.

It should be the purpose of the government, by guaranteeing or underwriting total consumer expenditure (thus so to speak organizing a system of national income insurance, to operate as hereinafter indicated), not only actually to maintain an adequate flow of purchasing power, but, by assuring this flow of purchasing power in advance, to let the prospective demand exert its full stimulating force upon all enterprises producing goods or services for market. This suggestion is meant literally: the government should give an unconditional guarantee of aggregate consumer expenditure.

Insofar as the inducement thus offered to private enterprises stimulates economic activity, it will also swell the flow of consumer income and spending by way of the normal channels of income. It is to be expected that a governmental guarantee of total consumer spending will have some *tendency* to secure full employment without the need for emergency public employment, and that regular and emergency employment together will have some *tendency* to fulfil the consumer spending guarantee without the need for special subsidies to consumption by the government. But the consumer spending guarantee given by the government must in any case be accurately fulfilled, whether this requires additions to consumer purchasing power from the Treasury, or whether it requires subtractions from consumer purchasing power to prevent overfulfilment of the guarantee, with consequent possibility of price inflation.

How large a volume of consumer spending shall be stipulated for any given year or other period of time should be determined by experts after due consideration of the factors relevant to the problem, such as prevailing money wage rates, price-level policy (taken in relation to total productivity), the expected extent of the additional market provided by government orders, foreign investment, and consumer credit.

The spending guarantee should within limits of feasibility be presented for a number of years in advance. The purpose of this is to establish a confidently expected trend in total consumer demand, which not only will remove some of the general over-all risk from current investment activity (capital formation), but also, by making price trends more predictable, will lessen the fluctuations in investment activity that arise out of speculative anticipations of price changes.

To bring consumer spending up to the stipulated level when it tends to fall short, orderly and just means must be provided for putting additional purchasing power into the hands of consumers. Congress should therefore determine in advance how the additional income money is to be distributed if and when such distribution proves necessary—whether through established channels of the social insurance system in the form of extra benefits, or by payments to all family units and individuals in the nation, or in some other manner. In deciding upon the formula for distribution of additional income money, so far as that is required, Congress should take into account the desirability of reducing existing income inequalities.

The point need scarcely be labored, today, that it is as essential to prevent an excess of consumer spending as to prevent a deficiency. Monetary measures undertaken without full recognition of this fact carry with them the grave danger of inflation. Congress should therefore legislate in advance the form of taxation or other means whereby consumer spending is to be brought down to the stipulated level in case it tends to exceed that level.

The sources of funds for subsidies to consumption, when needed, are in general the same as the sources of funds for public works or for any other purpose of government. Governments may levy taxes, or borrow, or issue their own noninterest-bearing notes.

In accordance with its objective of a full volume of production and employment, the government should levy any taxes designed to pay for subsidies to consumption or for public works in such a manner that they do not burden production or reduce mass purchasing power, but fall rather on large wealth and large incomes, on inheritances, or on the idle bank balances of individuals and corporations.

The government should also borrow such idle balances as it may require for these purposes, compulsorily if necessary; for clearly it is antisocial to hoard money, refusing either to spend or invest it, and correction of this abuse in no way voids the rights of private *enterprise,* properly construed.

Generally speaking, it is better in maintaining the monetary circulation to tap existing idle pools of money than to create additional money to substitute for what is lying idle. However, if for any reason the program of taxing or borrowing existing money proves inadequate to accomplish the named objectives, the government should be free to issue its own noninterest-bearing notes.

Monetary and fiscal questions are intimately connected with the rate of interest. The government through its central monetary and banking authorities should control the net rates of interest paid on money borrowed at long and short term.

A low basic rate should at first be established, in order to encourage housing and the further development of the nation's physical plant generally, and in order to keep down the cost of any government borrowing incidental to fulfilment of the full-employment policy. Moreover, the future trend of the rate of interest should so far as feasible be determined and announced in advance, both to minimize uncertainties and wastes connected with the construction of houses and other durable equipment and to prevent fluctuations in hoarding such as arise from speculation regarding the future course of the rate of interest.

Ultimately the decision as to what constitutes an adequate rate of return on loaned money should belong with the people; first, because it has an obvious bearing on income distribution, second, because it plays an important part in determining how large a proportion of current economic activity is to be devoted to social saving, or in other words to the production of capital goods rather than goods for immediate consumption. Hence steps should be taken to make the rate of interest a political issue as soon as intelligent debate on the subject is possible, and to settle this issue in a democratic manner.

This in a sense is a digression. The next point, however, is absolutely central.

The government should take the monopoly problem in hand—construing that term broadly so as to include not merely cases in which there is a single seller but also related situations (duopoly, oligopoly, etc.). The concept of control over the volume of production activity exercised by way of control over the volume of consumer spending presupposes the kind of response to buyers' demand associated with (a) competitive producers, or (b) monopolies that, as the result of regulation or for some other reason, act not to maximize their profits but rather to approximate or at least parallel the results given by competition.

Conceivably the beneficial effect of a guarantee of an amount of consumer spending sufficient to assure a normal competitive profit throughout industry as a whole, with industry operating at levels yielding full employment, might be entirely destroyed by the price-raising and output-restricting policies of monopolies. Dominating the production and distribution of the necessaries of life, they might levy an increasingly large toll of profit for themselves, without permitting either themselves or others to give the normal competitive response (expansion of production and employment) in the exceptionally profitable lines in question. Meanwhile not enough market demand would be left over for the products of competitive producers in other lines (who incidentally would also have to pay exorbitant prices for any products bought from the monopolies) to justify expansion on their part. Hence total employment would fall short of what could be expected to result from the same total consumer demand in a system of universal competition. These unfavorable tendencies are very much in evidence today, being greatly strengthened by technological progress where patent control is used to increase the dominance of corporations already powerful in their field, and by financial tie-ups, and so on.

In addition to restricting output directly, monopolies by their excessive profits accentuate income inequality, which is undesirable in itself and furthermore tends to depress total consumer spending and increase the volume of hoarded money. Also monopolies can be a grave threat to political democracy.

From all of these considerations it follows that private monopolies must be subject to adequate restraint or regulation to safeguard the general welfare, and consequently it should be the business of the government to see that adequate restraints and regulations are imposed. These may take the form of publicity, price regulation, vigorous action under the antitrust laws, encouragement of cooperatives to enter into competition with monopolies, measures to give small companies access to the loan markets on terms more nearly equal to those enjoyed by the big corporations, public yardstick plants, revision of the patent laws, obligatory output rules based on criteria other than maximum profit—or such other forms as may be held advisable. While so-called monopolistic competition is not necessarily undesirable, and indeed may often be the only kind of competition possible, and while even private monopoly as such is not to be condemned automatically, the crux of the matter is that the restrictive practices of profit-seeking private monopoly cannot be tolerated. The government should therefore prevent these restrictive practices; or, if that is not feasible, then federal, state, or local government should own and operate the economic facilities in question.

Turn finally to the problems of our economic relations with the rest of the world.

Foreign trade and investment must be viewed from the standpoint of the general interest. From that standpoint it is seen that they are desirable insofar as they serve to promote an *effective use of resources* by securing a balance of trade based on regional (international) specialization in accordance with comparative efficiencies, but undesirable where they are used in an attempt to expand the *volume* of domestic production by securing foreign markets not offset by home markets opened to foreign producers, or to exploit foreign labor or foreign natural resources or achieve political domination abroad. The effort to avoid or eliminate domestic unemployment by finding convenient foreign outlets for goods, money, or population leads down the road of economic imperialism to war. In view of the injustice and suffering ultimately involved, it can now be supported only by those who do not understand that a nation like the United States can establish permanent full employment without resorting to external economic expansion or aggression.

What is needed is not an isolationist approach. On the contrary.

While sources for many previously imported strategic materials can be developed at home, the superior foreign sources should still be kept open if it does not take war to keep them open. Existing export trade should be an object of consideration, so as to avoid, where it can be avoided, the dislocation of the particular industries and kinds of farming that rely upon it. When requests are received for funds for development of backward areas, loans should if possible be granted, provided repayment seems assured and the terms are generous and fair, i.e., not such as may drain the wealth, restrict the economic independence or infringe the political sovereignty of the borrowing countries. Every effort should be made to get rid of tariffs and other trade restrictions (on a bilateral or multilateral basis so far as that can be arranged) and thus to move toward a condition of free trade, qualified as required by defense and by considerations of long-run evolution; for in that kind of free-trade world, producing a surplus of those things at which we are most efficient to exchange abroad for those things at which we are least efficient, we can have a higher national standard of living than if we are obliged to be our own jack-of-all-trades. Indeed it is obvious that the more international cooperation in all spheres of peaceful action, the better.

What is essential, however, as the foundation for any kind of sound foreign policy, is recognition that the problem of *quantity* of production and employment—the problem of securing prosperity in the sense of full employment—must be solved by *domestic* economic measures. Only on this foundation can be built a structure of durable peace in which the good will that Americans feel toward other peoples can find adequate practical expression.

While taking steps to avoid needless exchange fluctuations, which discourage trade, and while renouncing the use of currency devaluation as a weapon of economic aggression, the government should vary the exchange value of its currency if and when that proves necessary to correct a deeply rooted tendency for the foreign demand for dollars to fall short of or exceed the domestic demand for foreign currencies at the existing valuation.

If necessary the government should also place limitations on speculative short-term capital movements, and on any other international economic activities, including long-term investment, that may be found to be sacrificing the general welfare to the private advantage of the few.

AGAINST THE NEO-THOMISTS:

In Defense of the Angelic Doctor

By HORACE S. FRIES

MANY PEOPLE who a few years ago were all but ignorant of the name of Thomas Aquinas now find him the first philosopher of all times. Eloquent pens proclaim that his supreme insight into the ultimate nature of things can re-establish the stability and security which the blackguard, science, has disrupted and robbed from the modern world.

Certainly the modern world requires some kind of a synthesis or ordering of the scientific venture. The latter must be given its proper place and function in the larger whole of life. The experimental enterprise, with its accompanying technological power, has yet to be accommodated to the deeper yearnings and aspirations of men.

Thomas Aquinas performed just this function for the thirteenth century. The new knowledge of nature at his time was not experimental; it came largely from geographical exploration, the Crusades, and the new interest in Aristotle. And the rapid commercial development then was not based upon mass production. Nevertheless these innovations threatened to wreck entirely the existing moral and spiritual tradition. Eventually they did. But the critical and informed thought of Aquinas softened the blow, and provided a relatively secure transition from the customary Augustinian and feudalistic outlook to the confusing novelties of the Renaissance.

For his philosophy was indigenous to the life of the thirteenth century. Every important element of that life is reflected in the Thomistic view, and there was no element entirely untouched by it. His originality (he was far from a mere imitator of Aristotle) and intellectual daring are watchwords for our contemporary Thomistic movement. He was keenly aware of the new interest in the world of men and the observation of nature, an interest which turned out to be even more revolutionary than he could guess; and he radically reshaped the best instruments he could find, the novel ideas of Aristotle, to try to make a satisfactory and fruitful place for this new development within the intellectual tradition. It is not surprising, then, that Thomas, as well as other philosophers and churchmen of his day, experienced directly the importance of philosophy as an instrument for shedding light and understanding on their basic social problems.

We find ourselves today in a similar period of strain, and in need of a guiding philosophy to help us bring about an adjustment between the new power-knowledge and the deeper demands of life. Nothing could be more natural in this situation than to turn to the philosophical thought of the thirteenth century. Accordingly, for a number of Americans the name of the Angelic Doctor has become more than a symbol of superstition and a sign of the futility of prescientific attempts to understand the world. He has become the spiritual leader for a new and modern philosophical movement known as Neo-Thomism.

There can be no doubt of the importance for us of thirteenth-century thought. For the past thirty years the philosophies as taught in most of our universities and colleges have become notoriously more and more irrelevant to the practical social and spiritual problems which harass us. Perhaps the very absorption of modern philosophy in science has kept a large part of it from shaping itself into a working guide to contemporary living. The philosophy of Aquinas was not academic or removed from the practical problems of his day. No longer can it be said to be remote from our problems.

But there is a fundamental and crucial difference of opinion over the nature of his philosophy, and this disagreement corresponds with two diametrically opposed philosophical efforts to orient science in our modern world. The one is the Neo-Thomist. The other may be called the Philosophy of Democracy. But this latter must be understood as an interpretation which conceives democracy to be so much more than a mere political form involving majority rule, that it might better be called a way of life or, if one pleases, a religion.

Neither Neo-Thomism nor the Philosophy of Democracy are mere academic games. The former for all practical purposes is the philosophy of a world-wide institution, the Catholic Church. Accordingly, both it and the Philosophy of Democracy represent two sets of actual, operating social forces in the world. But, as will be shown below, Neo-Thomism subordinates the questions of democracy, along with all other questions, to the concrete interests of the Church. Consequently the disagreement between the two philosophical attempts to reinterpret science, Neo-Thomism and the Way of Democracy, imposes a serious intellectual obligation on those concerned with democracy to come to a clear understanding of the basic issue at the heart of the matter.

II

First, let us look at the difference of opinion over the philosophy of Aquinas. Both sides agree that the thought of this thirteenth-century genius is important today. The disagreement is over the reasons for this importance and its nature.

According to Neo-Thomism this philosophy is of value for us because it incorporates a clear perception of eternal and absolute truth. That is to say, it contains principles which, without being changed essentially, can serve us today as guides to living. We need do only two things. One is to separate out these absolute principles from the accidental factors which enter their thirteenth-century expression. The other is to express them clearly in a modern idiom. Since these principles are absolute, they are as relevant now as ever. And since there cannot be independent sets of absolute principles, the basic "truths" perceived by Aquinas are the *only* ones which can serve us.

On the other hand, the Philosophy of Democracy charges that Neo-Thomism misconstrues the very nature of philosophy. Its function is not to enunciate absolute truths about God, Being, Man, and the *Summum Bonum*. Instead it is a purely relative, social, and human affair. Its chief task is to establish a continuity of ideas through which men can pass safely for a while from the old and familiar intellectual habits and outlooks to the new problems brought about by new times and novel conditions. Thus it is an aid to securing as painless a transition as possible from the familiar to the strange. Its job is to make us at home in the ever-changing environment.

In other words the Philosophy of Democracy maintains that the importance of Thomism today is limited, as are all the great philosophies of the past, to a lesson in relevancy. A study of Thomism in relation to the time and tradition in which it lived can help us in formulating a *new* philosophy; it cannot serve as a substitute. But because it was vital in its day, it can help us to construct a new approach which will be vital in our day; an approach which will actually work in organizing and ordering the twentieth century so as to preserve and enhance democratic values in the face of the new world which the technological age is bringing into existence. But to learn this lesson from the thirteenth century, we must first learn how to read the history of philosophy (and religion) as we read the history of all other human affairs. That is, we should look at the great philosophies as natural, human expressions of some of the deeper yearnings and aspirations of men in order that we may see them as one kind of effort to establish order and a satisfying security in the threatening world of change. Only as studied in this way can Thomism help us to come to an understanding of our own times. To look at it, as do the Neo-Thomists, for Absolute Truth is to miss the kernel because of a superficial interest in the husks.

The Neo-Thomists maintain the exact contrary. Adler, DeWulf, Gilson, Maritain, to choose a few bright names, hold that the value of Thomism for us consists entirely in the fact that St. Thomas saw the eternal truth, and expressed it with a clarity and relevance for all time which has never been equalled.

In justification of part of our title, even if it does not express our chief concern, we may raise an interesting question. The philosophers of democracy maintain that the chief function of philosophy is to establish intellectual continuity between the old and the new. So, according to them, it can be no reflection on the system of Thomas that it succeeded for less than a century. But the Neo-Thomists make his greatness depend upon the slim chance that he caught a glimpse of "eternal and absolute truth," which may or may not exist; they therefore make his reputation depend also upon all the assumptions and transcendental, metaphysical subtleties and qualifications which such a claim involves. The question we leave with the reader is this: Which side honors Aquinas more—the Neo-Thomists in search of "absolute truth," or the philosophers of democracy in their attempt to use his experience to establish a temporary but satisfying home in a world made sick by science?

III

Now Neo-Thomism not only subordinates questions of democracy to the interests of the Church but all other questions as well. If this general claim can be demonstrated, it obviously will not be necessary to show specifically in what way democracy becomes secondary. The specific development of this question about democracy would involve us in the general nature of the conflict between the philosophies, and here our interest must be limited to showing the importance of the question itself.

That Neo-Thomism subordinates all claims to those of the Church can be shown by its famous treatment of the relation between faith and reason. Traditionally with modern philosophers, this relation has been known as the dependent subordination of philosophy to theology. It accounts for the unfortunate neglect of Thomism by most Protestant and non-Christian philosophers. For Catholic theology means Catholic doctrine based upon what the *Church itself says* is revealed truth. It is not for philosophers or other laymen to decide where revelation leaves off and human judgment begins. This question is settled by the Church hierarchy and ultimately, if necessary, by the Pope. The opinion of the laymen and even philosophers may, of course, influence the decision, but the decision is out of their hands.

It is clear, then, that if Neo-Thomism makes reason dependent upon faith, if it makes philosophical opinions subordinate to Church doctrine, then the actual criteria of philosophical truth, according to Neo-Thomism, are subordinate to the Church. Now for Neo-Thomism philosophy is not a mere academic pastime. It is a guide to life. If philosophical truth is dependent upon theology, then theology is not only the queen of the sciences, as the Neo-Thomists say, but also queen of life itself and of democracy. But our Neo-Thomists vociferously deny that philosophy is under such control. Let us examine their denial.

No Neo-Thomist denies that his philosophy is harmonious with Church doctrine. Indeed, only by emphasizing this harmony can Neo-Thomism be for all practical purposes the philosophy of Catholicism. For any philosophy which can be shown to the hierarchy to conflict dangerously with the doctrine is automatically pronounced false philosophy or atheism. In short, all Neo-Thomists recognize, and a few proclaim it abroad, that philosophy *as a study* is subordinate to theology.

But philosophical truths, necessary conclusions reached by Right Reason as the Neo-Thomists say, with no logical dependence upon revelation, are said to be independent of the latter. Thus "true" philosophy is independent of theology though subordinate to it. Of course, nobody wants a philosophy which is false. Therefore the dependence of the latter upon theology is *merely negative*—so our Neo-Thomists argue. That is, only when philosophical thinking deviates from "truth" will the Church intervene. Since both revelation and true philosophy yield truth, there can be no conflict between them: Neo-Thomism rejects emphatically the infamous theory of the two-fold truth which marked the beginning of decadent renaissance scholasticism. Theology, accordingly, does not interfere with true philosophy; and since it only interferes with the false, this negative control is a complete asset to mankind at large and carries no liabilities.

The pathetic nature of such reasoning is clearly evident to anybody who doubts that the Catholic Church possesses revealed truth. This fact demonstrates the dependence of Neo-Thomism upon the Church. For if one does not doubt the absolute truth of "revealed" doctrine, then of course one will philosophize in such a way as not to contradict it; and he will do so "voluntarily," just as any modern philosopher will reject conclusions which to his mind contradict that H_2O is water. Hence "true" philosophy is "independent" of theology *for Neo-Thomists,* since a good Neo-Thomist, by definition, cannot reach conclusions which are contrary to Church doctrine. But the moment any philosophy is proposed which either opposes or even doubts this doctrine, that moment it must be labeled false or atheistic by both the Church and Neo-Thomism. It is a serious reflection on our intellectual climate that in the face of this fact the Neo-Thomists have the audacity to set themselves up as the only true intellectuals of the day; that they can so much as claim to be the sole defenders of reason and rationality in a confused world made such by science.

IV

But what difference does it make that Thomism subordinates philosophical opinion, and thus the guiding interests of life, to the opinion of the Church hierarchy? If Thomism is really based upon absolute truth, as it claims, then it is relevant for all times, even though the "perverseness" of our scientific age causes us to object strenuously to the supremacy of theological dogma. Without considering directly the question of the absolute truth of Thomism, assuming for a moment that absolute truth exists, we may point out one important consequence of this argument.

Absolute truth, if there is such a thing, should certainly be relevant for all times. But it follows that a philosophy which claims to be absolute but which proves to be irrelevant for a given period has sacrificed its claim to absoluteness.

Now both sides to the controversy agree, we said, that in some sense or other Thomism is relevant today, because of its intimate tie-up with the basic problems of the thirteenth century. But this kind of accordance alone is insufficient. All great philosophies belong to the times in which they flourish, and can thus teach us lessons in relevant philosophizing. Unless Thomism is relevant, also, *as absolute truth*—that is, as a guiding philosophy for all times—then Thomism remains merely one method among many, *given appropriate social conditions,* for securing transition from the customary to the novel.

But there have been many changes in social conditions since the thirteenth century, brought about mainly by the advent of science and its applications in industry. Thomism was an important philosophy because of its direct bearing upon prescientific conditions. In exact proportion to the change of times, Thomism, as a guiding philosophy for today, becomes irrelevant. Accordingly, the Philosophy of Democracy argues, the very pertinence of Thomism to the thirteenth century makes it irrelevant to us—except as a lesson in relevancy.

Furthermore, taken as a guide to contemporary life, Thomism is bound to re-enforce the conditions and tendencies which now make for dictatorships. For Neo-Thomism is an "authoritarian" philosophy. It is entirely under the final authority of one social institution among many, and ultimately of one man. But the kind of nondemocratic authoritarianism which can function in the modern world is not that of the benevolent but pathetically unrealistic intentions of the Neo-Thomists. Instead, it is the kind illustrated in the Nazi and Soviet forms. Consequently, Neo-Thomism, in proportion to its popularity and superficial appeal, becomes a genuine social evil; the more so since it affords the illusion, which many absolutisms provide, of a systematic and neatly ordered guide to life. That it was a systematic and orderly guide is not denied. But it could serve in this capacity only because of its organic relation with the social conditions of the century. To transplant a philosophy which was the crowning intellectual achievement of the prescientific world into a world made chaotic by science is to confound confusion. Hence the good intentions of our "liberal" Neo-Thomists and the absurdity of their final appeal to theology should not mislead those concerned with democracy to treat Neo-Thomism as a mere theological or academic indulgence. For the nature of its irrelevancy causes its innocent intentions to miscarry, and unfortunately they miscarry in the direction of dictàtorship. The shades of Aquinas would descend into purgatory before assenting to such use of his philosophy.

V

Some of the Neo-Thomists seem to recognize the irrelevance of their philosophy (to everything but the Church). But in spite of this they are willing to risk the cost for the sake of so-called absolute truth (as the Church decides). But whether recognized by Neo-Thomists as irrelevant or not, this philosophy can (if necessary) be shown to be completely out of touch with enlightened living today by one brief illustration. As Maritain (*True Humanism*) and Gerald Vann (*On Being Human*) and other Neo-Thomists emphasize, the relevancy of Thomism for us depends upon its so-called humanistic features (with the preservation, of course, of the pre-humanist supernatural trappings—miracles and all). Now one necessary feature of this "humanistic" claim is its theory of the unification of body and soul. The Thomists are critical of St. Augustine's Christianized Platonism because it considered the soul to be in the *prison* of the body. Hence all bodily and material interests were to be repressed. Thomism, on the other hand, certainly represents a liberation (to a degree) from this dualistic opposition. This was one of Thomas's great achievements. In Thomistic theory not only is the body dependent upon the soul but the dependence is mutual. The soul does not depend upon the body for its sheer existence, once it has been created within the body. But, for example, my soul would not be uniquely mine as differentiated from yours were it not that my body is different from yours. In short, the complete and unified existence of a human soul does depend upon the body which it inhabits.

Now obviously this involves an interesting ("univocal") consequence for the doctrine of a satisfying and complete immortality of the individual. And immortality, according to Thomism (and, of course, Neo-Thomism) is the ultimate blessed state for human beings, once the trials of purgatory are surmounted. Thomas had no reason to hesitate, accordingly, in admitting the ultimate resurrection of the body. For without it, given the "humanist" emphasis on unity of soul and body, our immortal lives could not be fully blessed. But one will search the pages of modern "liberal" Neo-Thomists diligently to find an occasional reference to this question. And if one is fortunate he may find here and there a fearful and indecisive commitment to this crucial humanist implication of Neo-Thomism.

But according to Neo-Thomist doctrine itself, an absurd implication of a philosophy makes that philosophy absurd. And probably all of us will admit that an absurd philosophy (relative to the times) is, to say the least, irrelevant. It might be interesting to calculate how many planets would be required to furnish bodies for all the souls which, according to Neo-Thomism with its "humanistic" emphasis, are destined ultimately to find their way from purgatory to the blessed state.

VI

Another demonstration of the inadequacy of Thomism as a guiding philosophy for today can be afforded by reading Thomas's five proofs for the existence of God. Doubtless these "proofs" are valid enough, *given the Thomistic logic*. But one survey of them will convince the unindoctrinated reader of the complete irrelevance of the entire logical apparatus.

For many years now modern philosophers have been emphasizing the weakness, from the viewpoint of science, of this outworn Aristotelian logic of Thomistic and Neo-Thomistic philosophy. The structure of this logic is one of predication about a subject. This sounds harmless enough in grammatical terms. But "subject" here refers to more than a mere grammatical convention. It means *substance*.

In order to see why the Thomistic logic is inadequate for science it is necessary to come to some understanding of this technical term. Every real thing, according to Thomism, is a substance. The substance of a thing is that which supports the attributes or properties which a thing has, and its relations to other things. It imposes limitations upon the kind of change that can occur to anything, and upon the kind of relations into which it can enter with other things. A specific substance has a fixed character or *essence* which is eternal and absolute. That is, it cannot be changed. A given reality may come into existence or be destroyed, but its essence remains one and the same, eternally. Not even God can change the essences of things. Thus the world has a fixed structure imposed by the substances out of which it is made. This structure regulates and restricts all changes in such a way that they conform with the eternal truth of things as envisaged in the mind of God.

Now, as even the Neo-Thomists admit, experimental science discovers no such fixed substantial essences. Essence for science, were it to use the term at all, would be an affair of relations. Science searches for correlations—that is, for relations—among changing processes or occurrences. These are technically termed *events*. Thus the objects of science are not fixed substantial essences but relations among dynamic happenings. It discovers changes and institutes new changes. We have only to look at our industrial environment to realize this. Science has been aptly defined as the invention of the method of invention. The permanences in nature, for science, are not substances with their eternal essences. Instead they are relatively enduring patterns or organizations of events. They are supported or maintained not by a static substance but by their relations to other processes. Theoretically no pattern is impervious to change; everything can be transformed into anything else. And there is considerable practical backing for this theory. Water is a certain specific interaction between hydrogen and oxygen. But these two "elements" can actually be obtained from a myriad of "substances." Furthermore, even some of the so-called "elements" have actually been transformed in the laboratory into other "elements."

VII

But this conflict between a relational logic of science and the absolute subject-predicate logic of Neo-Thomism would not be particularly serious were it not that the technological consequences of science have permeated the every-day practices of our modern world. Consequently, a far more serious, even tragic, weakness of the Neo-Thomistic logic lies in its effect on morals and values generally. For it implies that values and moral judgments to be genuine or valid must be based upon an absolute moral standard. Accordingly when anthropology reveals the relativity and variability among the actual concrete values and judgments of different peoples, the conclusion is that none of these are genuine. They are mere subjective opinions or irrational customs with no real objective backing. Ethical considerations, then, and the effort to make enlightened evaluations among the conflicting loyalties and claims which characterize the world today are wasted in a vain attempt to find some unchanging ideal or *summum bonum* or an absolute moral law. No attempt is made to develop a critical *relativistic* technique of evaluation which might have some chance of working in the changing technological world made such by science. Consequently, the development of concrete methods of evaluation is left to chance or to the whims and vested interests of ruling classes or institutions. Right for all practical purposes becomes synonymous with might.

Unfortunately, among the outstanding names of our contemporary philosophers who have emphasized and developed the theory of the relational logic of science, Dewey, Russell, and Whitehead, only the first has shown its precise bearing upon our every-day social-moral judgments. That is why so much of modern philosophy, outside of Dewey and the other philosophers of democracy (notably Boyd Bode and Max Otto), strikes the usual university student and a number of philosophy professors as being purely "technical" with no practical import. But many government administrators and teachers in our universities, who perhaps have never read a word of Dewey and little or no other philosophy, have none the less felt the same surge of creative opportunity which Dewey has expressed in his philosophy and which the development of experimental science has made possible. When once our floundering intellectuals have discovered the nature of this opportunity they will not be tempted to retreat to a prescientific, absolutistic logic in order to find an objective and steady, although relative, basis for superlative human values and for their moral evaluations. Change and decay they see all around. But change *need* be associated with decay only on the basis of a philosophy of substance the nature of which is to restrict and subordinate change to a wishfully imagined permanence. When endurance is taken to be the persisting pattern maintained by a specific course of events, the problem of life becomes that of deliberately instituting changes to generate and support those various and variegated patterns which are found to constitute the richness of life.

Even Maritain (chapter two of *Scholasticism and Politics*), an acknowledged leader of Neo-Thomism, recognizes the difference between a working logic of science and the logic required for the metaphysical, religious, and moral interests which he represents. But he has made his choice. Fortunately we are under no moral or intellectual compulsion to follow him. Science offers us a means of securing satisfactions so dear and in the past so rare that they have been thought to be miraculous gifts of the gods, incapable of being won by intelligent and diligent experimental search. All we need do is decide to use science for this purpose.

Yet in spite of the impossibility for Thomism to help us to an intelligent use of science, in spite of the current dangers of this philosophy mentioned above and its willingness to grant that as a guide to modern life it may be temporarily irrelevant (except to the Church and to a chosen few who are to carry the light), in spite of its explicit subordination of philosophy to theology and its all but explicit acknowledgment of the dependence of philosophical truth upon revealed "truth" *as determined by the Church hierarchy;* in spite of these glaring defects and dangers, Neo-Thomism makes a strong appeal to a few of our disillusioned intellectuals.

The reasons for this absurd appeal are evident enough. Under the inspiration of Maritain, Neo-Thomism in its "liberal" form clamors against capitalism, yet justifies a temporary acquiescence in the threatened defeat of democracy. It insists on the metaphysical significance of mysticism, yet offers a systematic and nicely ordered set of outworn abstractions as a "guide" to modern life. It accepts a very modernistic interpretation of physics, yet arbitrarily limits the area of scientific method. It clothes a crude supernatural doctrine in the esoteric garb of philosophy, yet maintains that pesonal effort and endeavor are necessary to preserve individual "purity" in order that the light of "truth" shall not go out forever. By these means Neo-Thomism soothes and consoles and flatters our disillusioned radicals for the tragedy of their lost dream. Unfortunately, at the same time, it diverts into compensating and speculative channels, and for the sake of the vested interests of a medieval and dictatorial institution, the attention and effort which otherwise might be used to broaden our traditional ideas of science and democracy so as to include within them a tentative, searching, relativistic, and self-corrective approach to the ominous problems of the modern world. Such a humanized idea of science has been proposed by a few first-rate scientists and by the philosophers of democracy. This idea involves a naturalistic method which can take hold of men and conditions *as they are today,* a democratic method which can transform these conditions gradually but persistently ever a little closer to the heart's desire. But to realize the promise of human fulfilment afforded by modern conditions we cannot allow ourselves to be diverted ever so little by the siren call of the eternal verities. For the voice of "Absolute Truth" is, alas, the voice of men, hungering for power. But to channel power in the cause of righteousness, for which men also hunger, we must create new and relative values to meet the new and relativistic conditions of a scientific technological age.

Bibliographical Notes

An interesting and successful effort to read humanistically the histories of the great gods of religion is found in *Biography of the Gods* (Macmillan) by A. E. Haydon; his *Quest of the Ages* (Harpers) is also worth examination. For a humanist interpretation of the ideals of God, Freedom, and Immortality, see M. C. Otto, *Natural Laws and Human Hopes* (Henry Holt). The classic introduction to such a reading of the history of philosophy is John Dewey's *The Quest for Certainty* (Minton, Balch); especially the first three chapters, and his *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (Henry Holt). The difficulty in understanding Dewey rests mainly in the necessity of getting out of the orthodox approach to philosophy, which has been bred into our intellectual bones by the genteel tradition, the positivistic approach, and the philosophies of materialism including Marxism.

One of the interesting paradoxes concerning authority in Neo-Thomism is its claim to *infallible* revealed truth accompanied by a recognition that its belief in revelation depends upon *fallible* historical evidence—evidence, indeed, which all non-Catholic scholars reject as erroneous. For the dogmatic restraints placed on Catholic historiography, examine the interesting *Medieval Panorama* by G. G. Coulton (Macmillan), pp. 435 and beyond, and the letter of 1899 from Pope Leo XIII to the French clergy on the study of history. For statements by Pope Leo XIII and the "liberal" Father Ryan of the *non*-democratic (not *universally anti*-democratic) nature of Catholicism, see Ryan and Boland, *Catholic Principles of Politics* (Macmillan), pp. 300, 310. A survey of chapters XXII and XXIII of this book will afford an explanation of why in many city, state, and federal governmental departments or subdivisions the number of Catholics is highly disproportionate to the number of Protestants and unbelievers. (In the original edition of this book, called *The State and* *the Church* by Ryan and Millar, the corresponding sections are pp. 18-19, 28; and chapters I and II.)

An interesting discussion of "Christianity, Authoritarianism and Democracy" by a Protestant thinker will be found in Hugh S. Tigner's *Our Prodigal Son Culture,* chapter XIII (Willett, Clark). But Protestants cannot avoid a similar issue to that presented in the article above. For it is certainly questionable that any form of Christianity can avoid authoritarianism. For a statement of this claim, see "Christianity and Democracy," by C. M. Bogholt in the Summer issue (1941) of *The Humanist,* pp. 57-60 (published by the American Humanist Association, 1201 Union Street, Schenectady, N. Y.). And for an important statement of the meaning of authority in a democratic society and its intimate relation to the meaning of authority in science, examine John Dewey's "Science and the Future of Society" published in the selections from his writings edited by Joseph Ratner and called *Intelligence in the Modern World* (Modern Library), pp. 343-363; this address is also published in *Authority and the Individual,* pp. 170-190, of the Harvard Tercentenary Publications.

On the seeming willingness of the Neo-Thomists to risk the temporary irrelevance of their philosophy, note the following: In *Scholasticism and Politics* (Macmillan), pp. 10-11, Jacques Maritain hints strongly (and the hints are repeated throughout his writings) that Neo-Thomism may come into its own only after a dark night of several centuries. In *Freedom in the Modern World* (Scribner), pp. 140-141, he tells us that if the social revolution now under way is eventually to yield a genuine Christian system in the social order destined to supplant capitalism, then a small number of Catholic men of genius in the field of action must cooperate persistently in training for leadership to this end. Again in *True Humanism* (Scribner), p. viii and throughout, on the ground that they presume to place the destiny of man in the hands of men, he objects to philosophies which are mainly directed to the *transformation* of our life and world; and these philosophies include democracy where it is considered a way of life. Mr. Adler, to choose another interesting exponent of Neo-Thomism, tells us in *Harpers,* October, 1940, p. 535, that only a miracle can save democracy now, but that even without this miracle democracy will eventually be born again out of a better (a Neo-Thomist?) culture. It would be enlightening on this last point to quote these and other Neo-Thomists on their theory of the treatment of heretics; of those, that is, who deny Church doctrine, in particular those who actually preach "false" doctrine. See, for example, *True Humanism,* p. 144; *The Brooklyn Tablet,* Nov. 5, 1938 as quoted in the *The New Republic,* Dec. 21, 1938, p. 196; *The State and the Church* by Ryan and Millar pp. 34-37, as quoted from in *The Christian Century,* April 6, 1938, p. 424; (or the revised edition called *Catholic Principles of Politics* by Ryan and Boland, pp. 316-319). For a brief but devastating analysis of certain "liberal" and anti-capitalistic (anti-bourgeois) aspects of Neo-Thomism see chapter VI in Sidney Hook's *Reason, Social Myths, and Democracy* (not that Mr. Hook is defending capitalism or the bourgeois mind).

On the scandalous claim of Neo-Thomists to be the sole defenders of reason and the true intellectuals of the modern world, note the following: In *True Humanism* (p. viii, my emphasis) Maritain presents the book (or the author—the reference may be ambiguous) "whose *unique* pre-occupation is with the truth." The attitude which naturally accompanies such a claim is clearly apparent in many of Mortimer J. Adler's writings and throughout Maritain. For example (in *Scholasticism and Politics,* p. 115) the latter, not being a legislator or "an inventor of constitutions," declines to describe the political system the basis of which he is expounding. But a full-page footnote begins: "However, in order to prevent the suspicion that I have no definite idea of what such a system might be, I will give, as simple indications, the following details." In the Foreword of the same book (p. vii, my emphasis) he states as part of its purpose that it "attempts to *solve some of the fundamental problems* of political philosophy and of the philosophy of modern history." Such remarks and their underlying spirit should be compared for contrast with the attitude of the philosophers of democracy who aim to *clarify* certain *aspects* of our basic social and political problems in order that they can be formulated in such a way, by those who will solve them (if they are to be solved), that in the course of events men cooperating together may work out a solution. In a worshipful adulation of Maritain (*Jacques Maritain*) Gerald B. Phelan tells us (p. 9, my emphasis) that in "the great and noble task of restoring order and sanity to the Western World . . . *the* great protagonist [in the field of philosophy] is Jacques Maritain," who (p. 11) is referred to as *"The Philosopher* of the Twentieth Century, a God-given guide and leader of thought for the age we claim as ours." Maritain is working (p. 12) "to restore the human mind to order and so, with the

Grace of God, to bring the world back to the paths of Truth." He is (pp. 14-15, my emphasis) the "physician of the intelligence confidently forecasting the restoration of the modern world to intellectual health almost in the same breath in which he had declared that it had gone mad. . . . By a sort of metaphysical psycho-analysis [*sic*], Maritain proceeds to disclose to the modern mind the *details* of its malady." Mr. Phelan is not a newspaper reporter or a radio announcer; he is (or was in 1937) Director of the Institute of Medieval Studies at Toronto. Etienne Gilson, who perhaps is the most modest of writers in regard to himself, tells us in a good Neo-Thomist vein that "a powerful revival of the medieval feeling for the universal character of truth [is] *our only conceivable protection,* humanly speaking at least. . . . against the encroachments of the totalitarian state in its various forms" (*Medieval Universalism,* p. 16, my emphasis). In his "Introduction" to *God and Intelligence* by F. J. Sheen, G. K. Chesterton says, p. vii: "In this book, as in the modern world generally, the Catholic Church comes forward as the one and only real champion of Reason." The twist of meaning which could be made here (because of the capital "R") to save face would be too ironical even for the ironical Chesterton.

On democracy conceived as a way of life, see Boyd Bode's *Democracy as a Way of Life* (Macmillan), John Dewey's *Liberalism and Social Action* (Putnam) and *Freedom and Culture* (Putnam), and Max Otto's *The Human Enterprise* (Crofts).

Scientists who have written books and articles about the humanization of their discipline (their numbers are gradually increasing) include J. D. Bernal, F. A. E. Crew, J. G. Crowther, T. Swann Harding, Lancelot Hogben, Julian Huxley, Hyman Levy, Robert S. Lynd, and Frederick Soddy. I cannot refrain from calling to the attention of literary students a little book by James Harvey Robinson called *The Humanizing of Knowledge* (Doran). This contains suggestions which, miraculously enough, can make the Ph.D. thesis in English of genuine significance for years to come.

COMMERCIAL CRITICISM AND PUNCH-DRUNK REVIEWING

By MAX GISSEN

THE CHARGE most commonly made against little-magazine poetry reviewers is that their critical practice consists of taking in each other's washing. The complaint, and it is sometimes richly provoked, is that they address only each other, thereby chasing away the average prospective customer, who is made to feel that he doesn't belong. That can never be said of the reviewers who grind out tailored-to-please copy for the commercial newspapers and periodicals. Theirs is primarily a selling job. Except under certain circumstances which shall be examined later, the working reviewer here in America cannot be regarded as a practicing critic of books; he must be thought of as a most important, though outwardly independent, part of the publishers' selling force. This is a charge that has been leveled at reviewing in the commercial press on several occasions in the past, usually without qualification and always without attempting to get at the roots of the condition. The simple venality suggested in the fact that many book reviewers, willingly or unwillingly, have become so many salesmen haranguing the trade is quite serious in itself. What is even more important is some understanding of the pressures that produce the ultimate dishonesty. At the same time it is worth examining some of the reasons why the review section in most of the independent periodicals have failed to reach large numbers of discriminating readers who are fed up with the simpering judgments glorified by the *New York Times Book Review* and regarded as models by most newspapers. Flabby book reviewing is always nauseating in the way that a politician nauseates when he is obviously being all things to all men. But today, when the influence of books in shaping men's ideas is greater than ever before, business-as-usual reviewing is one of the major faults in a press whose disingenuous statement of most contemporary developments has long since divorced it from the needs and interests of the great majority of Americans.

First, in his capacity as businessman, the publisher cares nothing for criticism or honest judgment. His only objective is to sell books. Obvious as that is, it seems a reality that many people find hard to grasp. Among college students especially there persists the notion that there is something romantic and idealistic about publishers and book publishing. It is a notion that I clung to for several years, and I still occasionally run into college friends who are quite ready to drop fair jobs of all sorts to "get into a publishing house" at much lower salaries. (Publishers have, of course, taken unmerciful advantage of these poor romantics. Key people in important houses, after many years of service, receive wages so low that even an occasional handshake with a Pulitzer Prize winner loses the power to mollify them. I know one underpaid publisher's assistant for whom, after only five years, the trade has completely lost its glitter. And she a veteran of publishers' cocktail parties for three Nobel Prize winners.) It is perfectly true that some publishers have now and then published books and encouraged writers without a thought for profits. And there is at least one American publisher who would consistently rather publish a book he believes to be good than clean up on an artificially created best seller. Such examples merely relieve the general picture. Roughly, they are what a scientific research fellowship supported by General Motors would be to the automobile industry. Both are gestures involving compensation through prestige. General Motors is still, naturally, concerned first and foremost with selling cars. And publishers are, also quite naturally, primarily interested in selling books. From a cold business standpoint it would be almost too much to expect that publishers should overlook the apparent advantages of harnessing the reviewer's comment to the rest of their publicity. To be useful, that comment must be favorable, at the very least kindly. Here then is the beginning of a tacit understanding involving the publisher, the newspaper or magazine, and the reviewer. In such a setup it is the reviewer who must be crushed, and through his defeat comes the raw deal for the book-reading and book-buying public.

Just as the book publishers are interested only in sales, the advertising offices of newspapers and commercial magazines think of books and publishers only in terms of paid space. For the advertising man the best selling point he can raise is the rave review given the publisher's last book. Since his success in selling space depends largely on the favorable publicity value of his review section, he finds it to his interest to "work along with" the book editor. The resultant pressure varies in intensity and it is a mistake to think that independent, subsidized journals are free from it. All advertising men are cut out from the same model. Even on noncommercial periodicals the book editor must listen constantly to the demand for more "reasonable" reviews, although the magazine's very reputation may depend on freedom from softness. In such cases, of course, the answer lies entirely with the editor. Among progressives one occasionally finds editors who feel that it might be better to "cooperate" with publishers. While swearing to defend the independence of both the magazine and the reviewer, they suggest suavity rather than directness in the writing, or less space devoted to criticism and more given to a statement of content. Such suggestions, for all their seeming amiability, are always dangerous; in practice they always result in a decline of critical standards, for the reviewer who writes with them in mind is no longer his own man.

The heat is often turned on the reviewer in the most disarming fashion. Frequently he is given a book with the artless statement that "Tom Frothingham over at The House of Books says that *With Bone and Muscle* is sensational." A careful reading discloses that *With Bone and Muscle* is a thoroughly routine historical novel, in every important respect just like the last hundred off the assembly line. Shall he say so? If he is writing for a liberal periodical or one of the little magazines he can and probably does, usually in a brief note. But if his review is to appear in the book section of a newspaper, his problem becomes rather complex. Is The House of Books going to make a big thing of *With Bone and Muscle*? Perhaps. He looks into the publishers' trade magazines and finds that the book is to be backed by a heavy advertising budget. His duty then becomes clear, though sickening. With a barrage of adjectives and clichés and forced enthusiasm he does his part to get a best seller launched. Sometimes his job is clear from the outset, as when he is told that the book is to be the top item on the publisher's list for that season. But even under ordinary circumstances, that casual suggestion from his editor almost inevitably makes the reviewer uneasy enough to decide on a middle-of-the-road notice, with a selection of quotable lines for the ads.

The young reviewer, usually fresh from college and anxious to do only the sincere thing, finds the breaking-in process somewhat brutalizing. An acquaintance of mine, whose unusual ability enabled him to "crack" the book section of a large New York daily on his initial trip, found most of his unfavorable comments edited from his first review. It happened again the next time and he was really troubled, because in effect his opinions were being falsified. The blowup came when he reviewed a rather poor book saying what he could in its favor in the opening paragraphs and rapping it sharply for its faults toward the end. A couple of Sundays later, when his piece appeared, the final sections were completely missing. Anyone reading the review would have been quite justified in supposing that the critic could find nothing but praise for the book. The publisher happily used a few lines in an ad. My friend never went back and he never got another book.

Another acquaintance, a girl whose enormous enthusiasm for books is coupled with sound critical judgment, spent weeks in book editors' offices without success. They liked everything about her sample reviews, everything except their forthrightness and their healthy contempt for the third rate. But this girl was bound to get on. As soon as she learned the score, she wrote up a new batch of samples; except for their freshness, since she was not yet jaded by constant hackwork, they might have been lifted from the Boston *Herald* or the New York *Times* and O.K.'d by the editors of *The Saturday Review of Literature* in concert with a committee of publishers' blurb writers. A month later her first review appeared in the New York *Herald Tribune*. Since then I have seen her work in at least three Eastern papers.

These two cases, and they are not untypical, indicate sharply the problem of the serious reviewer. The writer who refuses to play ball within the setup is immediately cut off from most sources of revenue, such as it is, and publication. His market consists of a few liberal weeklies and a handful of struggling quarterlies. Usually he is forced to give up critical writing entirely. Hard-boiled editors, who know how hard it is to find competent reviewers, sometimes say that criticism loses few important talents in this way. I cannot agree, if only for the reason that sincerity and plain speaking are thus carefully kept away from newspaper reviewing. But even if the loss of talent is slight, there remains the system itself which is built on greed, expediency, compromise, and hypocrisy. The young woman who came to terms with the system is certainly not satisfied, since she is forced to hedge every honest judgment she arrives at. Because that is so, it may be said that the readers of her reviews usually get bum steers. All of which adds up to the conclusion that contemporary book reviewing is to a large extent a service rendered by newspapers to some of its advertisers.

It would be a mistake to think of the whole process as being worked out on a highly conscious level. Such instances as the one related by Frank Swinnerton, where an English publisher forced a newspaper to fire a hard-hitting reviewer, are certainly few. Such unpleasantness is made unnecessary through the tacit acceptance of the setup by all concerned. The publisher, the advertising man, the book editor, and the reviewer generally get the thing done without too much vulgar fuss. Naturally there are missteps. Occasionally a book editor refuses to stomach the game when the book is plainly bad, and orders the kind of review it deserves. Sometimes a reviewer finds that he can swallow just so much and no more and manages to get into print what he really thinks. Not infrequently an authority in his field or a writer who is bigger than the book section goes to town and puts a crimp in the publisher's hopes. But those are merely the unforeseen exigencies that keep the game from becoming a bore. They merely emphasize the governing pattern.

Commercialism is not the whole reason for poor book reviewing but it is a more important one than is ever supposed. The dominating principle is that even the most palpable tripe can be boosted on some ground or other. Find the book's best feature and harp on that. . . . What you take away with the left hand, be sure and give back with the right. . . . Always try to end your review with a kind word. . . . Even if your review is finally unfavorable, sprinkle it with a few clusters of praise that the publisher can salvage for his future advertising. . . . Where are these rules laid down? Read the Sunday book sections of twenty large newspapers and see if they do not leap from the pages.

One of the most depressing results of following these rules is that all the regular reviewers begin to sound alike. Not only that, but one book is reviewed in much the same *tone* as another, and quite different, book. This is especially true of novels. It was Albert Guérard, Jr., who made the acute observation (*The New Republic,* December 8, 1941) that popular book reviewing fails to "distinguish clearly between literature and 'book-business commodity'," and, further, that the serious writer and the popular hack were approached with the same critical vocabulary. The truth of his charge is thoroughly illustrated in every issue of the

New York Times Book Review and in the Sunday book sections of as many papers as you care to thumb through. The trouble is that when sales talks replace criticism, the reviewer is forced to fall back on the limited tools of the blurb writer, and those are tools that quickly become dull. Having called a third-rate novel colossal, all that is left to say about a first-rate novel is that it is supercolossal.

The effects of constant, slogging sameness are unfortunate not only for the honest reviewer who is forced to grind it out or quit. Writers of superior books so reviewed often suffer from exactly this excess of uncritical good will. And, ironically enough, the publisher is himself often the victim of the will to please. To distinguish clearly between the good and the bad, or the effective and not so effective, a conscious critical approach is absolutely essential. No summary of the action and no determined application of adjectives can possibly be satisfactory. What chance, then, has the regular reader of a newspaper review section to decide between literature, or even near literature, and the machine product designed for the hammock trade? In most cases, I think, there is very little chance indeed, and this is especially true in the case of novels and biographies. The superior book, unless its advertising budget demonstrates its worth, comes off so little better than run-of-the-mine stuff that only another reviewer could hope to spot it. The injustice to the better writer is obvious. Whether or not he "clicks" with the public becomes, so far as the influence of the reviews is concerned, somewhat a matter of luck. As for the publisher (and there are several, not too big, who must rely on the quality of their lists rather than advertising splurges) he may lose out on a good thing precisely because his pressure for "reasonable reviews" has backfired.

An excellent current example of the unintentional unfairness brought about by such punch-drunk reviewing may be studied in the *New York Times Book Review* (issues of May 3 and May 10). Within a week of each other there appeared two novels dealing with the Mormon background—*And Never Yield,* by Elinor Pryor, and *A Little Lower Than the Angels,* by Virginia Sorensen. Both are first novels and both were reviewed in successive issues of the *Times Book Review* by Rose Feld. Now it requires no delicate critical balance to perceive that *And Never Yield* is an earnest but pedestrian job quite free of the slightest creative lift, while *A Little Lower Than the Angels,* with its intuitive handling of character and its approach to an individual style, is a first novel of considerable promise. But *And Never Yield* was published and reviewed first, and there, no doubt, is part of the explanation for Miss Feld's and the *Times'* unfairness to author, publisher, and reader.

Both the reviews follow the hackneyed pattern so dear to newspapers; they summarize the story in tiresome detail, carefully avoiding fundamental criticism. Neither book seems to have provoked even the feeblest idea in the reviewer's mind as to material, literary values, or validity of intent and treatment. But *And Never Yield* is found to make "a notable entrance." The characterization of its heroine gives it "special distinction." Then comes credit for "illuminating detail," "a keen and able psychological study," and "a warmth and naturalness that dissolves the barriers of time." Now, even though this is all from the cliché barrel, it is pretty high praise for a first novel. What was there left to say for Miss Sorensen's book? More of the same? Miss Feld didn't have much left. The best she could do was to note that "the three persons involved in the accepted triangle are subtly developed" and that the confusion of Mormon youth is "ably captured." The rest is dreary summary. No one reading these reviews could possibly guess that *A Little Lower Than the Angels* is the better novel. The maldistribution of sales talk suggests just the opposite. But the point I wish to emphasize is that the complete lack of critical standards makes such reviewing worthless and deceiving to the reader, and terribly unfair to the author. Had Miss Feld openly stated her preference for one of the novels, or criticized the other adversely, she might simply be indicted for bad judgment or poor taste. But basically the reviews are almost duplicates of each other. There is no critical preference and nothing to suggest taste or judgment.

Am I being harsh with Miss Feld? I think not. Much harsher was the reviewer in the daily *Times* on May 13. He did not mention Miss Feld, but he did review the two books together and had the good sense to state the difference between them quite clearly. I have selected this example not to single out Miss Feld. Her work is fairly typical of the wooden response to writing and content that characterizes the work of most Sunday-section regulars. It merely happens that I have just read both the books and I use the illustration both because it is pertinent and of recent date. With equal fairness, and for the same crimes, one might cite such *Times* regulars as Robert Van Gelder, Katherine Woods, Louise

Maunsell Field, Jane Spence Southron, Beatrice Sherman (what a preponderance of women!) and a squad of others. And practically all other newspaper book sections, unless I have had the misfortune to overlook important exceptions, stick pretty close to the *Times'* standards.

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There is, of course, nothing startling in the reviewing policies and standards of American newspapers. They are precisely what must be expected from a press which has made dissimulation a commonplace in its political and economic reporting. No one would expect from the New York *Times* or from the Boston *Herald* or from the Philadelphia *Record* a candid discussion of the reactionary tax laws now being cooked up in Congress. No one would expect these papers to report the role of big business in hindering essential war production. Why, then, in the world of literature and ideas expect them to tolerate honest criticism? The fact is that the social conservatism of editorial pages and the seven-day-week assault on industrial democracy are bound to find their counterpart in a newspaper's approach to literary matters. Nothing could be more fitting, for example, than that John Chamberlain should be the daily book reviewer for the New York *Times,* or that the New York *Herald Tribune* should buy the services of Isabel Patterson, whose column is devoted half to publishers' ballyhoo and half to ill tempered red-baiting.

Seen as a reflection of the fundamental social and economic objectives of a conservative press, newspaper book reviewing becomes something more serious than poor literary performance. It becomes, like the dilettante approach to literature glorified in college courses, a positive handicap to widespread critical thinking about the ideas expressed in current books. Playing ball with the publisher is but a part of the same code that cannot tolerate a probing of the author's real intentions, except in those cases where the book suggests progressive thought or action. Such books naturally become fair game in any season. The easy answer is that papers like the New York *Times* or the Boston *Herald* are read by the kind of people who want that kind of reviewing, just as they want the kind of editorials they find there. That is only partly true. Thousands of readers throughout the country turn to newspaper review sections whose judgments they do not respect, just as hundreds of thousands of readers follow accounts of strikes which they know to be prejudiced. It is at least as accurate to say about the press that during the past ten years Americans have been getting not what they wanted, but taking what they could get. That goes, in some part, for book reviewing as well as for news coverage and editorial comment. Through their failure to satisfy the tastes of advanced readers and their great willingness to encourage sloppy thinking on the part of the others, the newspapers are now the strongest influence working against a more popular critical appraisal of current literature.

One of the best recent examples of editorial reviewing which reflects the social and economic prejudices of the press arose in connection with Gustav Stolper's *This Age of Fable*. Here, in effect, was a glib, though quite patent effort to exonerate capitalism and capitalists of their considerable share of the blame for the present world crisis. As the slickest hocus-pocus defense of world conservatism that has come along in some time, the newspapers gave it a fine welcome. The *New York Herald Tribune Books* ran Thurman Arnold's review under the page-wide head: "Capitalism Is Not Dead; It's Democracy!" Mr. Arnold, a very busy man, simply didn't bother to come to grips with the book's basic intent but left the impression that Dr. Stolper was on the right track. The *New York Times Book Review* made the book front-page news under the head: "A Realist Looks for the Facts," and the subhead: "Dr. Stolper's Clear View of the Confused World Picture." P. W. Wilson, the reviewer, played right along with Dr. Stolper even to the extent of voicing his delight that Germany's millionaires did not back the Nazis as heavily, with money, as has been supposed. And, as evidence, he happily accepted a typically specious argument set forth by Stolper:

> How confidently we have been told that Fritz Thyssen financed Adolf Hitler! Dr. Stolper states that Thyssen's holdings in steel when Hitler was winning his way were only worth 12,000,000 marks. But the Nazis were collecting 45,000,000 marks for their party a year. So with the other millionaires in the slush fund. Their contributions were merely a drop in the bucket.

Stolper's half-baked documentation and his flip disregard for democratic goals in an industrial society were blandly overlooked by these and other newspaper reviews that I saw. To keep the record straight, it is necessary to add that a few part-time liberals lined up behind the book. As the book's reviewer in *The New Republic* said:

> It is a sad commentary on the present state of liberal thinking that his book has received such wide attention and acclaim from those who should know—and once knew—better. . . . The book, in my opinion, is based on a series of half-truths cleverly and skillfully argued, on a misleading use of statistics, not infrequently inaccurate, and on a wholly inadequate understanding of the social forces that go into the making of public policy. . . .

And then went on to give Stolper approximately the caning he deserved.

An even better example is furnished by the reception accorded Kenneth Roberts' *Oliver Wiswell,* if only because the book rode the best-seller lists for so long. Here was a historical novel so reactionary in purpose and so resentful of democratic aspirations that even decent conservatives might have been expected to condemn it. Under the guise of explaining the American Revolutionary War from the Tory viewpoint, Roberts screamed his denial that the lower classes in society have the right to redress their grievances through revolution. I can think of no novel written in the last ten years which is so shameless in its hatred for common people and so adoring in its regard for wealth and position. Nor can I think of many which are more poorly constructed or more thoroughly commonplace in writing and conception. Its one virtue, and it is largely a journalistic one, is Roberts' considerable ability to describe sustained, large-scale action. The author's reputation as a historical novelist and the book's enormous advertising budget made it certain that the newspapers would give it plenty of attention. But no one could have predicted the abject, cringing, nervous attitude of the reviewers, many of whom were grinding out stuff that they hated to see under their own names. The day *Oliver Wiswell* appeared, newspaper book reviewing in the United States hit its lowest level in years. To find a sell out of the same magnitude, one would have to consult the files of those French journals that openly sold their reviews to publishers. Perhaps the most shocking part of it all was the slick, "objective," tightrope-walking review of Allan Nevins in *The Saturday Review of Literature,* that coy handmaiden to the book trade. It would be difficult to find a more prime example of the complete lack of critical guts in academic reviewing.

It should be observed that this same conservatism, with its ingredient of commercialism, that results in slanted book chatter instead of criticism is not confined wholly to the newspapers. The national monthlies are heavily touched by it and so are many of the "respectable" quarterlies. What is even more sad is to find the conservatism, completely divorced from commercialism, discouraging critical plain speaking in academic quarterlies. One reads a new historical study, then turns to the reviews of the specialists and is forced to wonder if the materials of history ever mean more to them than blocks for monograph building. It must be a certain *esprit de corps* which makes it poor form for specialists to look behind the author's own background for a clue to his particular approach to history or economics. But the besetting sin of academic-specialist reviewing is a fussy concern for the bits and pieces of research, carried to the point where main currents and a critical examination of them are wholly ignored.

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"Book-business commodity" reviewing will continue just as long as the press retains its present general character. It is quite true, unfortunately, that such liberal papers as *PM* and the New York *Post* have done nothing to raise current standards. *PM* accepts no advertising and is probably, on domestic issues, the most honest and courageous newspaper in the United States. Yet its book reviewing has very little of its over-all quality. The writing is frequently poor and the reviewers, chosen too often because they are "names," are surprisingly timid and hesitant about coming to grips with a book's basic implications. The *Post,* under its liberal owners, has a record that is even worse. For some time its daily book column was the flabbiest anywhere. Then, for a while, book reviewing was given up entirely. The present syndicated stuff is a pretty feeble offering, wholly out of place in a paper whose editorial stand is generally courageous and intelligently concerned with ideas as well as immediate developments.

In time, the general spirit of the few liberal newspapers is bound to be reflected in their book criticism and if, after the war, they increase in number, there may very well develop a much healthier body of popular book reviewing. Even more important is the fact that many labor-union newspapers now review the socially significant books. Many of these reviews are superior in content and quality of ideas to most newspaper book comment and in some cases are at least as well written. The emergence of an influential labor press, intelligent enough to realize the value of good book comment, would vitalize all reviewing. But now, today, only the liberal weeklies carry review sections that in any measure consistently meet the serious reader's demand for forthright critical appraisal and sensitivity to literary values. *The Nation* and *The New Republic* could both do with harder hitting (and I mean above the belt) but they are the best we have if only because they escape both the pressure of commercialism and the deliberate, limited appeals of the quarterlies. While neither of them can equal, week after week, *The New Statesman and Nation,* the English publication, they give the reviewer complete freedom and the reader an honest appraisal. Neither, of course, has a "mass" circulation, and I have been concerned chiefly with newspaper reviewing. But good newspaper reviewing is a quite unlikely prospect for the near future. When it comes, it will be a by-product of newspaper standards growing out of a sense of responsibility to the needs of all the people.

LIBERAL EDUCATION IN A REVOLUTIONARY WORLD

By ALGO D. HENDERSON

To discuss the function of liberal education today, one must remember that the world is in a state of revolutionary flux. When within a single week one can read a review of Ambassador Davies' eulogy of Joseph Stalin, the news of Great Britain's sending a messenger of supplication to Gandhi and Nehru, and the announcement by the editor of *The Saturday Evening Post* that he is resigning to write "the biggest story in America today, the story of the revolution that is taking place in American life," I need not dwell upon the point. We are all aware that the world is moving forward—or at least somewhere—with rapidity.

Keeping in mind this background of change, I turn to the dictionaries for assistance in definition of liberal education and find that, according to Webster, it is an "education primarily for culture," and that, according to Fowler in his *Modern English Usage,* it "is the education designed for a gentleman. . . ." I assume that all college educators have at least a rough idea of what these words mean, although in acting upon them there occur the extremes of President Hutchins on the one hand, attempting to purify liberal education in terms of the great traditions of the past, and of President Wriston on the other, attempting in his *Nature of a Liberal College* to rationalize everything about the present collegiate institution.

I do not find either these definitions or the interpretations of them very satisfying in analyzing the function of liberal education today. Both definitions carry connotations of elegant leisure which are inharmonious with the creative needs of contemporary society. They still carry the flavor of the Roman period when liberal education was the privilege of "free" (liber) men only, and of the later English period when culture was available only to born gentlemen. The idea of providing education for a gentleman's class is hardly fitting to a democratic society. When the world is in flames, it is unrealistic to believe that the ivory tower can be a safe refuge.

I do not say that the American colleges discriminate against unprivileged classes—they do not consciously discriminate. But the studies of such an organization as the Ohio College Association show that more than half of the upper fourth of the high school graduates of the state do not go on to college, mainly for financial reasons. And the only agency which has given promise of realizing Thomas Jefferson's objective for a democratic society of searching out the most talented young people and giving them the benefits of higher education—I mean the National Youth Administration—is being kicked downstairs. It is significant, surely, that the main kicks have come from educators. At the same time that the costs of education are rapidly increasing, the funds for scholarships are drying up, and the opportunities in normal times for self-help through employment are diminishing. The researches of the American Youth Commission make the latter fact only too clear. Thus we are in grave danger of drifting to a point where higher education is the privilege of only the middle and moneyed classes. But this point is only parenthetical to my main thesis.

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My primary observation is that liberal education needs to have a more vital, realistic, and dynamic role in contemporary society. In an effort to make my meaning clear I shall first resort to illustrations which in their contrasts I recognize to be extremes.

Let us picture, as one example, a liberal arts college which is wedded to the *status quo*. In its curriculum it worships the past. To be cultural, something must have withstood the tests of time. *The Grapes of Wrath* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* are not literature, but *Gulliver's Travels* and the plays of Aristophanes are. In 1910 Shaw's plays are not literature; in 1940 they are. Literature is not literature until time has gently extracted all social dynamic from the writing and it can be studied for pure aesthetic pleasure. Adam Smith and Ricardo are still the sources of economic wisdom although their observations were made in the period of transition from mercantilism to the laissez-faire economics of the industrial revolution. And Thomas Aquinas is the minor saint who reveals God to the professors.

This imagined college avoids any taint of vocationalism. A vocation is something apart from one's real life—it is the more or less necessary business of earning one's daily bread, of producing objects which are sold in the market place. When a man is through with the eight hours of the day devoted to this kind of business, he can slip into his smoking jacket and consort with the great minds of the past with only the glow of the fireplace to remind him of the world about him. If he is in a particularly reminiscent mood, even the fireplace can carry his speculation back to the days when men lived in caves with fires before them with never a thought for the teeming life which lay beyond the fires.

This college can comfortably avoid not only the market place but also all the controversial problems of the day. Its professors can be pure scholars, its scholarship dealing with ancient or unimportant matters and therefore not designed to influence the sweep of current events. Because of this, the college can rationalize any apparent timidity in its leadership. There is no need for drawing into its policy-forming board the best creative thought of the lay occupations and professions. The policy was formed in the dim past. It needs only to be preserved. And the means of preservation lie in a goodly flow of funds from wealthy contributors, whose dominant interest is in the *status quo*.

Now, my second illustration, again only suggestive, is of a college which has the focus of its attention upon contemporary society. It encourages its students and faculty to study the world of living facts—its strengths and its weaknesses, its major problems and its trends. It makes first-hand observations of men in their daily work, and studies their needs and aspirations. It spots the major pressures, and the pressure groups which are seeking to impress their needs (or to impose their wills) upon their fellow men. It analyzes these pressures in terms of needed adjustments and change. It aids its students to find their own best places in life, and to acquire foundation knowledge and skills through which to become effective in those places.

To help vitalize its current policy formation, it brings in lay advice and experience from every walk of life—industry, labor, agriculture, and the professions. It reconstructs its policy as it goes in order to contribute to the most pressing needs of the time and to make its influence a vital one. It seeks its income where current income flows, and fashions its economy to avoid complete dependence for existence upon the accumulations of the past.

This college, too, draws heavily upon the past experience of men throughout history. But it does so, not to seek culture for culture's own sake, but to shed light upon the present. It, therefore, searches the past for wisdom which will help solve the problems of the present and will aid in planning for the future. This different purpose in study brings about a different method in teaching—research as opposed to recitation.

Both colleges I have used as illustrations are concerned primarily with culture. In the one, the students apply the culture of the past to their lives as a kind of veneer. In the other, they begin with the study of the culture in which they live, since they must understand it before they can try to improve it. The past is for them important primarily as a source of understanding the present; for the ever-continuing present is but an evolution of the past. With the one, culture is a treasure; with the other, it is a process—life itself.

Since most American colleges of liberal arts do not resemble closely either illustration, but fall somewhere in between, I shall not pursue the comparison further. My objective, as earlier stated, is to make the concept of the second college clear. I want, therefore, to analyze it at greater length.

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John Dewey, in his *Experience and Education,* says: "We always live at the time we live and not at some other time, and only by extracting at each present time the full meaning of each present experience are we prepared for doing the same thing in the future. This is the only preparation which in the long run amounts to anything." This theory, with which I agree, seems to me to require of the liberal arts colleges two things which have not been a part of their traditional procedures. One is to give the students vital and realistic experience in life, and the other is to aim consciously at the definition of social values which can become part of the motivating and directing forces through which the student makes his contribution to society.

By experience I mean planned activity which will gear the student's life in with the life of the world about him. In some part, at least, this should include broad observations of social phenomena. For example, I think a college student should make studies of each of several major environmental settings in American life—agriculture, the industrial city, and the large metropolitan community—and also of the international scene, and in each instance define the problems which need solution in the process of bringing about a better life on earth. I am speaking of first-hand observation and experience because that is the means of developing genuine sensitivity to the facts, comprehension of their meaning, and motivation to assume leadership in improving the level of culture in present-day society.

In some part, also, the experience should include actual participation in work. Work helps the boy and girl find out more definitely what their interests are and for which occupations they are best fitted. It aids them in becoming genuinely productive. It adds knowledge and gives much greater meaning to classroom studies. Any vital experience of this sort brings out in young people the best qualities of initiative, resourcefulness, and responsibility. Incidentally, in a revolutionary world these qualities are especially needed, both for purposes of providing individual security and of helping bring order out of the general chaos. And there is some value in learning how to do physical as well as intellectual work, for it brings individual versatility of value under rapidly changing conditions, and sympathetic understanding of those who toil with their hands.

There are many other ways of providing students with experience, such as utilizing normal campus life as a laboratory in democracy, and emphasizing the method of research in study; but these illustrations will serve to make the main point. The objective of experience is to learn how to live fully in the ever-continuing present. Graduation from college is then but a social event which loses its former significance as the end of education and the beginning of life. Life goes right ahead.

In discussing experience as an educational method, I have in part anticipated my second point—the importance of getting a sense of direction in life. I assume that values are values only because they affect people's lives. As a result people are happy or miserable, energetic or lazy, acquire a sense of fulfilment of purpose or a feeling of frustration. Now, the shortcoming in intellectual leadership is that it often gets far removed from the life of the common man. The teeming life may be there, just beyond the fireplace, but the intellectual leadership is not a part of it. The way to remain sensitive to human values is to share in the experiences of other people—to learn at first hand of their problems, needs, and aspirations.

But that is only the first step in the search for greater knowledge. The next step is to get the perspective of these problems as they are mirrored in history, and to search out those past experiences of men which will make a present contribution; to discover what the great thinkers of the past have said and written which will be helpful in bringing greater present understanding. Sometimes we forget that the great philosophers and scientists of the past—the Platos, Aquinases, Newtons, Adam Smiths, Darwins—were mostly just speculating upon life and attempting to advance it a notch or two toward greater perfection. In a sense, I am pleading that college students be encouraged and taught to become philosophers and scientists who will help bring the society of their own time to greater perfection.

It does not suffice, however, just to rub elbows with the common man of the present, and to consort with the geniuses of the past. A third step is needed. Evaluations must be made, which tentatively, until they are discarded for better ones, become the directing factor in the individual's own work. It is the function of the college to help make these evaluations, not by imposition but through research and experience. They are crucially important in this revolutionary world of ours. Men have choices to make as between alternative modes of living: anarchy versus order, tolerance versus intolerance, opposition versus cooperation, hate versus good will, suppression of the individual contrasted with a harmonizing of individual and social interests. I believe it is part of the function of liberal education to interpret these choices in terms of the practical problems of the world. To make my own position clear, I believe that we must exercise leadership in bringing about some form of world order, in achieving a more equitable sharing of the economic advantages of our industrialized era, in striving for racial equality, and in finding the points of common ground for cooperation among the great religions and economic systems of the world. I believe that colleges cannot remain indifferent to the issues which have brought about a revolutionary situation in our time and that they must become factors of strong influence toward constructive ends.

In this view of liberal education there is a direct relationship between culture and life. Life is the expression of culture. One's daily occupation is the primary medium through which the individual reveals his own culture and makes his contributions to improving the culture of his society.

A liberal education loses its main vehicle for genuine expression if it is not an integral part of the process of learning how to work and to live successfully and effectively.

Both the logic of giving liberal arts students some vocational preparation for life and that of having liberal education concern itself with the essential problems of the time suggest that it is in harmony with the purposes of the college to relate its program to an emergency such as that confronting the United States today. Although war may seem to many of us to be the wrong method by which to attempt to work out the solutions to problems on the international scene, we are nevertheless in the maelstrom and can hope for no further progress along other lines until a decision in the war can be reached. Indeed, the emergency is so grave, and the chance so great that the values which liberally educated men hold good may be submerged for generations, that it becomes the duty of the college to throw its full strength into the national effort.

But the college, because of its research and its task in educating young people for future leadership, has also a peculiar responsibility to concern itself with the more distant future. An essential part of this concern, obviously, is the problem of postwar reconciliation and reconstruction.

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In this article I have been presenting a view of liberal education. I have made suggestions about methods and about applications of my general idea, but these suggestions were meant only to give my view reality and immediacy. If the function of liberal education is clearly defined, the methods by which students can be educated for that function can be left to the individual institution to work out for itself.

Let us recognize that persons with a liberal education do have a function in society; that this is the real social justification for having liberal arts colleges. And let us define the function. It is my belief that this function is that of furnishing leadership for society. In so far as the colleges are already turning out artists and scientists, or preparing students for other professional careers, there is no inconsistency with what I propose. But I am pleading several things: one, that to these choices of careers be added a multitude of new ones through which the educated man can come to grips with the problems of the common man; two, that the visions of these students be considerably enlarged so that they may function with a large vision as philosophers, designers, social engineers, and administrators; three, that they be given adequate orientation to the society of which they are a part; and four, that while still in college they learn how to function in contemporary society so that the process of learning and of leading will continue and accelerate as the student moves on in life.

Logically this should give a prolific source of leadership—and it should be leadership which can assist all human beings in living the fullest possible life consistent with men's knowledge, skills, and resources, leadership which can serve both as a leaven in society and as a directive force leading to intelligent choices in social action. Possibly after this well has flowed for a few generations, men will have learned how to use intelligence rather than brute force in solving the world's problems on the voyage of human progress.

Liberal education may be defined as the education which tends to produce the liberal individual—the person who, because of his perspective of history, his critical observation of contemporary society, and his understanding of social dynamics, helps to facilitate needed change in the world.

IDEAS FOR THE FUTURE

By J. DONALD KINGSLEY

In the present world crisis the literature of reconstruction[1] acquires special significance. Postwar aims today are something more than guides to behavior at some future peace table; they are important weapons in the ideological struggle which is a major aspect of the war. They are the keys which can unlock the floodgates of full-scale revolt in Europe and Asia and which can release the full creative energies of democratic peoples everywhere. Moreover, they provide the tests of policy today, for our conceptions of the future must determine in large measure the means we currently employ. The clarification of the ends for which we are fighting is thus no academic exercise; it is vitally related to our success in the war as well as in the peace.

In a democracy, moreover, the formulation of postwar aims cannot be left entirely in the hands of official agencies. The views of the government itself can be influenced by a coherent body of opinion and the preparation of such an opinion is not a primary function of government. This is not to say that public officials cannot give a lead, as Mr. Roosevelt has done in the proclamation of the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter.

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[1] The following books are reviewed in this article:

The Lost Peace. By Harold Butler. Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1941. 246 pp. $2.75.

The Making of Tomorrow. By Raoul de Roussy de Sales. Reynal & Hitchcock, 1942. 338 pp. $3.

The Coming Showdown. By Carl Dreher. Little, Brown & Company, 1942. 419 pp. $3.

The Unfinished Task: Economic Reconstruction for Democracy. By Lewis Corey. The Viking Press, 1942. 314 pp. $3.

The Road We Are Travelling, 1914-1942. Twentieth Century Fund, 1942. 106 pp. $1.

Post-War Worlds. By P. E. Corbett. Institute of Pacific Relations, New York, 1942. 211 pp. $2.

The Coming Age of World Control. By Nicholas Doman. Harper & Brothers, 1942. 311 pp. $2.

But in the final analysis, public opinion is molded by other means in a democracy. It is thus especially heartening that so many serious books on the background of the war and of reconstruction should have been issued in the days since Pearl Harbor. I do not propose to deal, by any means, with all of these; but those that I shall examine may be taken as representative of the best.

I

We won the last war, but lost the peace. Such a development will not again be possible. We can be victorious this time only if we take those steps during the war which look ultimately to the winning of the peace. This is a hard lesson to learn, and one which we have not yet taken to heart in this country, despite the experiences of France and England. But success even in the military phases of the present struggle depends upon the initiation of major changes in our social and economic structures; and the changes required for victory are, for the most part, precisely those which will put us in a position to win a durable peace. Such a conclusion follows inescapably from the nature of the current conflict. For this war is clearly the expression of a profound social and economic revolution which has been under way at least since 1900; and one of the striking things about recent books on reconstruction is the unanimity with which they recognize that fact. The war will be won by those nations which most clearly understand the nature of this revolution and gear their efforts to it. The peace will be won by those groups who are able to harness the force of these revolutionary developments to the common aspirations of mankind.

What I am suggesting is that the broad outlines of the future can be perceived more clearly than Mr. Raoul de Roussy de Sales, for example, implies in his *The Making of Tomorrow*. For in the long run, social institutions and political arrangements must conform to the demands of two major sets of compulsives. They must be in harmony, on the one hand, with the level reached by the industrial arts—with the technological potentialities of the era; and they must meet, on the other hand, the considered expectations of men. Existing social arrangements are defective on both counts; and it is for this reason that the present situation is revolutionary. But it is also clear that, with such tools of analysis, we can predict the future within rather broad limits. We know, for example, that the small, independent sovereign state cannot possibly exist in the modern world. It can maintain itself neither economically nor militarily; and it is therefore safer to predict that the world of the future will be marked by much greater political and economic centralization than has been true in the past. I merely cite this as one illustration of the fact that previews of the future do not need to be utopian and rootless; nor does the intelligent man throw up his hands and say that he can make nothing of the mess. On this count, at least, I find Mr. Roussy de Sales' book unimpressive.

It is now clear that we lost the last peace because of a failure of analysis. Neither the Allied peoples nor the Allied leaders understood the real nature of the world economic and political problem in 1919. Indeed, we can now see that many of Wilson's doctrines, like that of self-determination and national sovereignty for small nationalities, were directly opposed to the technological imperatives of the age. There were other failures of analysis as well, many of which have been skilfully and entertainingly exposed by Harold Butler in his admirable volume, *The Lost Peace*. Written with charm and verve, this book combines a storehouse of personal observations with a searching—though not always profound—analysis of the roots of our present discontent. Mr. Butler has had an admirable background for the making of just such a book. From the organization of the League of Nations to 1938, when he resigned as director of the International Labor Office, he was intimately associated with the first great experiment of international government. Nor did this constitute his only contact with public affairs. Before going to Geneva he held an important executive post in the British Ministry of Labor, and his approach is the objective one of the trained civil servant. Any treatment of the problem from such a source is worthy of careful consideration.

In a brief account, I can give no adequate indication of the rich personal flavor of *The Lost Peace,* and I shall content myself, therefore, with an analysis of its ideas. The volume is really a series of independent, but related essays. Mr. Butler analyzes the failures of the old diplomacy, that "gentlemanly game of foreign affairs" which, from time immemorial, chancelleries had carried on in "dignified seclusion." A new world had emerged out of the World War, but the conduct of diplomacy had not altered to meet it. It was

> pathetic to find diplomats in Vienna clinging desperately to the decayed remnants of the Austrian aristocracy and only meeting the plebeian holders of political power in their offices or on formal occasions which could not decently be avoided. In Czechoslovakia it was smarter and more amusing to spend the week end in the castles of a Swarzenberg or a Hohenlohe, who were hankering in their hearts to restore the old feudal overlordship of the Germans over the Czechs, than to hobnob with the sober, middle-class statesmen who were building up the most democratic state in central Europe.

Similar attitudes have been laid bare in Nevile Henderson's *The Failure of a Mission* and it is clear that the road which led to Munich was being prepared by class-conscious diplomats of the Western democracies as early as the mid-1920's. The peace was lost in part, at least, because the diplomatic staffs of the Western nations were drawn from a narrow segment of the population and were, in all too many instances, out of sympathy with the new world in the making. The problem which this poses is a serious one, and one not altogether unknown in America. The Cudahys and Kennedys and Breckenridge Longs have been more numerous among our foreign representatives than the Davies' or the Bowers' or the Dodds. Mr. Butler makes no attempt to solve the riddle of government personnel in a revolutionary age, but he states the problem admirably.

The failures of statesmanship in the period of the twenty-year truce were not confined to the foreign services. Everywhere national leaders shirked the responsibility of informing their people of the necessities of international organization and cooperation. Indeed, only in the labor movements was there developed "a community of aim and sentiment" which promised to provide a foundation for international organization. Mr. Butler examines neither the reasons for the reluctance of European statesmen to accept the League whole-heartedly, nor those that led organized labor to think in international terms. His book would have been more solid had he done so. For in the contrast of attitudes between labor and upperclass politicians it is possible to discover the ends which nationalism has everywhere served.

Mr. Butler deals in some detail with the fall of France, the riddle of Germany, and the plight of the states which succeeded the Austro-Hungarian empire. There is much here that is already familiar. In France, "despair and defeatism percolated from the top downwards, not from the mass upwards." To some Frenchmen "patriotism was less important than party, to others it was less important than property." France fell because of the rottenness of her social system, because big business preferred Hitler to the New Dealism of Blum. This is an analysis which has been substantiated by dozens of observers and with which it is difficult to quarrel.

Mr. Butler is equally lucid in his interpretation of the failure of the Weimar Republic. It was neither, he suggests, the weight of reparations nor the character of the Treaty of Versailles which accounted for its downfall. The Republic fell because the German revolution stopped short of its goal. The Social Democrats failed to destroy the power either of the army or of the old bureaucracy, and "men trained in the Prussian bureaucracy who had been loyal to the Kaiser could not bring loyalty to the Republic." The moral from all this is clear. New times demand new men. Democracy cannot be entrusted to those who doubt its premises or question the ends to which it is directed.

But all of this is, in a sense, marginal to the main argument of the book. The peace was lost, Mr. Butler thinks, chiefly because of a

> general failure to measure the extent to which the conditions both of peace and war had been revolutionized by the technical progress of the age. For the vast majority of people everywhere the world was still the world of the nineteenth century. It consisted of separate states each capable of leading an individual existence with nothing more than commercial relations with its neighbors and an occasional alliance when common interest made it expedient.

We now know that the world of the nineteenth century has long since passed away, though many of us still see it in a kind of afterimage. Even before 1919 technology had made the world economy a single unit, had led to the increasing industrialization of the colonial and backward areas of the world, had revolutionized agriculture and solved the problem of the world supply of food. But there was general reluctance to face the political consequences of this economic unification. Indeed, just when economic integration was becoming irresistible, the trend toward political fragmentation was accelerated. The Austro-Hungarian empire was divided into four new countries, Iceland asserted her nationality against Denmark, Ireland against Britain. "At the moment when nationalism was becoming out of date and unworkable in the economic field, it was flourishing with unprecedented luxuriance in the political field." It is this essential lack of equilibrium between the technological and political foundations of society which Mr. Butler finds at the root of our difficulties.

It is interesting that Mr. Roussy de Sales has made a somewhat similar analysis. The modern world has been shaped primarily, he suggests, by the three forces of nationalism, collectivism, and "a kind of absolute pacifism." Nationalism is antithetical to the other two and out of this conflict wars and revolutions are born. I shall have more to say of Mr. Roussy de Sales' book in a moment. At this point I only wish to note that the general tenor of his diagnosis is similar to that of Harold Butler.

With this broad analysis it is difficult to quarrel, though in the case of *The Lost Peace* the result would have been more satisfactory had Mr. Butler proceeded to an examination of the root causes of the destructive nationalism of the '20's and '30's. That he did not constitutes the basic weakness in his approach and makes his analysis something less than profound. For had he probed more deeply, I am convinced, he would have discovered the new nationalism to be rooted less in cultural considerations than in economic relations under monopoly capitalism. Nationalism has always had economic implications, but in the last generation it has become the major weapon in international economic competition: the means by which monopolistic corporations first extended control over the home market (tariffs) and then attempted to extend their influence to other regions of the world (imperialism). Such an analysis would have led Mr. Butler to a far different view of the future from that which he takes in his final chapter. For he would have seen that the only possible basis for a world order is the destruction of economic nationalism, and that that can be accomplished only by revolutionary changes within the national states themselves.

Despite this obvious weakness, there is much good sense in the final chapter of *The Lost Peace*. Mr. Butler sees clearly that "the mechanization of warfare has made it impossible for any single nation to be certainly capable of ensuring its own defense." He sees that in the economic sphere "isolationist policies are out of date" and that some form of international economic cooperation will have to replace the anarchy of the past. He sees clearly many of the problems of the transition period and he faces squarely the problem of enforcing the peace after the war. This will have to be done, he thinks, by Russia, Britain, and the United States—after the defeat of Germany, the only three powers capable of waging modern total war.

On the question of what to do with Germany, Mr. Butler is less than convincing. He agrees with Mr. Roussy de Sales that the Teutonic tendency to revolt against the West is too deeply ingrained to permit Germany soon to assume an equal place in the community of nations. But surely such a view raises more questions than it settles. For if Germany is once more excluded, will she not repeat the pattern of the last twenty years? And how does one exclude the most highly industrialized, and therefore potentially the most powerful nation in Europe, from a European settlement? It can, of course, be done, as Sir Robert Vansittart has lately suggested, by a process of dismemberment and de-industrialization similar to that presently being practiced by the Nazis against the Poles and the Czechs. But neither Mr. Butler nor Mr. Roussy de Sales proposes so drastic a solution and the question is left up in the air.

As a matter of fact, of course, there is a great deal of metaphysical nonsense in the notion of the German revolt against the West, as it has been expounded by a number of writers in recent years. At the very best, the argument that Germany has recurrently revolted against Western civilization and that German culture is inherently opposed to that civilization, rests upon a partial selection of the facts. At its worst, as propounded in Mr. Roussy de Sales' *The Making of Tomorrow,* the argument is fantastic. Mr. Roussy de Sales believes that while individual Germans may be all right, "it is not with individual Germans that the world has to deal but with this solid, organic, barely human thing called the German *Volk.*" This is nothing more than the notion of the group mind and is certainly as romantic an idea as can be found in the annals of German romantic philosophy. The German *Volk,* Mr. Roussy de Sales suggests, has been created by hundreds of years of conditioning to romanticism and militarism. It suffers from schizophrenia, but its bad soul is in the ascendancy and it tends to total evil. I submit that this is sheer nonsense. No individual German has been conditioned for hundreds of years and the explanation of German militarism in terms of absolute evil doesn't take us very far toward a solution. German culture has been the product of German and European conditions, not of some mysterious racial tendency; and the approach to a solution of the German riddle is in terms of changing those conditions. Mr. Roussy de Sales' analysis tends to make the only possible solution the liquidation of the whole German people. This is Vansittartism with a vengeance.

The Making of Tomorrow is a stimulating and important book, though I think myself that it has been considerably overrated. It has also been mis-titled, for it deals almost wholly with the past and only in the most desultory fashion with the future. We are in our present mess, Mr. Roussy de Sales suggests, because of our failure to resolve the contradictions produced by the operation of the three forces of nationalism, collectivism, and pacifism. Of these three forces, the "most important and most potent" is nationalism. This arose out of the destruction of the unity of Christian Europe by the Reformation and under the impact of the industrial revolution. The industrial revolution also produced the class struggle, which cut across national lines, but the capitalists "established their lines of defense on nationalist lines" and the force of nationalism proved too strong for the world solidarity of the proletariat.

Mr. Roussy de Sales correctly sees that "nationalism was the only excuse of the privileged classes for justifying their hold on the government" and that it has everywhere been employed as a shield for economic privilege. But he fails, it seems to me, to push his analysis to its logical conclusion. He undertakes no adequate examination of the factors which have produced the pathological economic nationalism from which we currently suffer and he seems unaware of the successful experience of Soviet Russia with cultural autonomy for the nations composing the U.S.S.R. The point is that the forces of nationalism are not necessarily destructive. They are destructive only when they are employed as the ultimate weapons in economic competition; and their employment for that purpose is an aspect of monopoly capitalism, the nature of which Mr. Roussy de Sales only dimly perceives.

I find a similar lack of precision in the treatment of collectivism and the conflict between capitalism and democracy. The trend toward collectivism is another of the categorical imperatives of our time. Whereas nationalism is "the great vertical force that tends to level down and unify social and economic groups within a country," collectivism cuts horizontally across boundaries and national allegiances. Its effect is to group men around rival ideologies which transcend national frontiers. The result is that the struggle in which we are engaged is multidimensional. There is a vertical conflict and there is a horizontal conflict and men like Quisling or Laval can step from one to another dimension at will. This is all true enough, though it is a rather elaborate method of saying that the class struggle is an important element in the world conflict. Moreover, to the extent that this is true, it would seem to me to indicate that the compulsive force of nationalism is declining, whereas Mr. Roussy de Sales' pessimism concerning the future rests directly on the assumption that nationalism is on the ascendancy.

In the matter of the future relations of capitalism and democracy, Roussy de Sales recognizes an "incompatibility between the existence of real equality and real freedom for all, and capitalism as it now exists and functions," and he foresees for the future a mixed economy in which the state will dominate economic life. There is, indeed, a universal trend toward "a more militant and more virile form of democracy." But whether this will mean an improvement in the lot of humanity is doubtful. We may lose personal freedom in the effort to gain economic security and efficiency. The argument on this score does not strike me as impressive. Mr. Roussy de Sales seems to imply an inherent conflict between personal liberty and a planned economy for which I can find no evidence. On the contrary, it seems reasonable to assume a considerable expansion of the area of discretion of the average man under a system of democratic collectivism.

The Making of Tomorrow ends with a consideration of America's role in the world of the future. Isolationism is no longer a possible policy. We have had world leadership thrust upon us. The rehabilitation of Europe can be accomplished only with American help.

The book is curiously inconclusive, mainly, I think, because of an inadequate economic analysis. But it does serve to emphasize the revolutionary character of the present situation; it is written with great distinction; it is strongly pro-democratic. Perhaps that is enough to expect of a single volume.

II

Economic aspects of the war and reconstruction have concerned a rather considerable group of writers in recent months. Of particular interest are Carl Dreher's *The Coming Showdown,* Lewis Corey's *The Unfinished Task,* and Stuart Chase's *The Road We Are Traveling, 1914-1942.* The authors of these books are united in their view that the revolution is on and in their understanding that the crisis of our age is a crisis of the whole economic and social system by which the Western world has lived for centuries. They do not, therefore, talk in terms of political superstructures to be erected on top of existing institutions, but in those of the basic imperatives of social change. Although their analyses of the root causes of our present chaos differ in detail, they are strikingly similar in broad outline, as are their prescriptions for the world of the future.

In *The Coming Showdown,* Carl Dreher has written a passionate and provocative book. Borrowing Thorstein Veblen's favorite theme of the incompatibility of business and industry, he has embroidered it, illustrated it, and brought it down to date, focussing the argument on the problems of the United States after the war. The result is an exciting and important volume. Briefly stated, Dreher's thesis is that technology has made capitalism obsolescent; that, indeed, in the period of high capitalism in which we now find ourselves, business is largely concerned with the sabotage of technology. A large part of the book is devoted to the illustration of this thesis in terms of case studies of business operation during the last war, between the wars, and in the present crisis. Special attention is given to the dollar-a-year men of the past and present and to the behavior patterns of the "business patriots." The whole is a more carefully documented and better integrated study than was I. F. Stone's *Business As Usual,* although some of the same materials from the reports of the Truman Committee were employed in both instances. Mr. Dreher writes, however, from a considerable personal experience, having been for many years a successful businessman and engineer.

The real essence of Dreher's thought is to be found in his discussion of the "Collectivist Revolution." The capitalist revolution, he suggests, "rose to its climax and ran down. Now there is another revolution—the collectivist revolution. It matters little whether we want to participate in it or not." It is inexorable. This revolution has been produced by technology, by the machine process, and has been under way for many years. It has already destroyed free enterprise in any meaningful sense and is altering every social institution. The collectivist revolution may take several socio-political forms. Nazism is consistent with it, as is Communism. But there are other alternatives as well, and Dreher prefers the one which has come increasingly to be called democratic collectivism. He is not convinced that we shall be able to avoid fascism in the United States, nor that we can build a democratic collectivist society in time. But he has no illusions about the alternatives.

The Coming Showdown is notable for the precision with which it outlines the procedures involved in constructing the new social order. We must start, Mr. Dreher thinks, with our present mixed economy—with its general division into a monopolistic sector and a competitive, small business sector. "Let the small business sector alone at first. . . . The monopolistic sector is the one where collectivization must begin." Mr. Dreher suggests the immediate transformation of our monopolistic corporations into public corporations directed by mixed boards representing management, labor, and the government. "The industries would be cartellized in accordance with the Murray plan or some modification thereof. Profits would be reduced to four or six per cent on actual capitalization. Over-all integration of industry would be effected by nationalization of the banks and measures of monetary control." A system of regional planning boards would be established, linked to a national planning board at the center.

But Mr. Dreher does not content himself with sketching a general blueprint for economic reconstruction in the United States. He also gets down to cases and includes a detailed analysis of the problems involved in collectivizing an industry, taking the machine tool industry as an illustration. This is one of the most valuable chapters in the book and should go far to reassure those who fear that the technical and managerial problems involved in collectivism are too difficult for solution.

In so brief an account I cannot do justice to a volume so rich in suggestions as this one, nor to the masculine style in which it is written. *The Coming Showdown* is an important tract for the times. This is not to suggest that it is free of imperfections. Mr. Dreher's technological theory of social change, like that of Veblen from which it stems, is altogether too mechanistic and provides an inadequate basis for understanding the social disintegration which characterizes our world. It leads him to miss completely the great questions of political power which are unavoidably imbedded in the transformations he suggests and to rely too heavily upon the engineer as a vehicle of social change. But in spite of these serious flaws, Dreher has written a book which should not be missed by anyone who is interested either in the effectiveness of our war effort or in the shape of the postwar world.

In *The Unfinished Task,* Lewis Corey has undertaken a more ambitious analysis of the social crisis and of the problems of economic reconstruction. His book is, in fact, remarkable for its breadth and for a sustained effort to blaze new trails of social thinking. Dissatisfied with orthodox Marxism, Mr. Corey embarked some years ago upon the uncharted seas of revisionism and this volume continues his deviation from the Marxist position. At present he can best be described, perhaps, as a new-liberal. He is more aware of economic realities than was the old-fashioned liberal, he has not wholly abandoned the class analysis of the Marxists, but the goals he envisages are not unlike those to which Thurman Arnold is committed. His methods of reaching those goals would be quite different from Arnold's, however, for Mr. Corey is convinced that the regulation of monopolies through the antitrust laws is ineffective.

Corey begins his treatise with an examination of the crisis of the old order. This he traces primarily to the growth of monopoly, which has destroyed, in turn, free capitalism and the limited state. In the past, he believes, individual liberty depended upon a separation of political and economic power and this was successfully achieved during the early stages of capitalism. But with the growth of monopoly, capitalism became unable to solve the economic problems of society, and excess capacity and chronic unemployment were the results. At this point, pressure developed for the state to take over control of the economic system, as it has done in Germany, Italy, and Russia, and as it tends to do everywhere.

This tendency toward a concentration of political and economic power in the state, Mr. Corey regards as dangerous. The Russian experience shows, he believes, that even after the elimination of private ownership of the means of production, the centralization of economic power in the state leads to tyranny. This, it seems to me, is a debatable point, upon which we need further evidence before reaching final conclusions. All of us are discovering that a war economy means a high degree of regimentation, the control of man power, and the general restriction of individual liberty, and it can be argued that the illiberal character of the Soviet regime has been due to the fact that Russia has been forced by circumstances to maintain a war economy for twenty years. At best, the argument from the Russian experience cannot be conclusive.

Obsessed with a fear of state power, Mr. Corey proposes to solve the problem presented by monopoly through a form of socialization of monopoly corporations that will not give overwhelming economic power to the state. He sees realistically that such socialization can be accomplished only by a strong political movement and a large increase in the power of the state. But the attempts to break up monopolies and to enforce competition have everywhere failed and no other course remains than the abolition of private ownership in monopolistic corporations through state action. At this point, Mr. Corey, like Carl Dreher, would make use of the public corporation as a device, rather than resorting to "bureaucratic government ownership." The result would be the operation of big business by technicians and managers, checked by strong labor, cooperative and consmer representation, and by independent business, for full production rather than for profit.

The problem with which Lewis Corey grapples, namely, how one is to use the state to realize the potentialities in the machine process without incurring the dangers of totalitarianism is, of course, a basic problem of our time. *The Unfinished Task* is a serious and important contribution to our thinking about it. It should be read by everyone who aspires to social literacy. Yet, for myself, I find Mr. Corey's analysis unsatisfying, particularly on the political side. His belief that our check and balance system has been instrumental in preserving American liberties (aside from the "liberties" of the great corporations) seems to me to be contrary to the facts. More often than not the system has prevented governmental action which was urgently necessary if the liberties of large segments of the population were to be preserved or extended, and one needs only to go back to Mr. Roosevelt's experience with the Supreme Court to illustrate the point. Mr. Corey, I believe, conceives of liberty in terms which are entirely too negative. He thinks of it primarily as the absence of political restraint, whereas there can be no liberty at all for the weak unless rather stringent restraints are placed upon the strong. Indeed, the destruction of economic freedom in the modern world has been in large measure the direct result of the nineteenth-century system of political freedom.

Mr. Corey advocates the establishment of a constitutional economic order in which labor, management, and government will check and balance one another, and he outlines rather detailed institutional forms for such an order. This is one of the most provocative sections of the book and there is much in common between the suggestions here outlined and those of Phillip Murray for industrial councils. There is, of course, an important difference also, for Mr. Murray has not suggested the socialization of large industry as a prelude to the introduction of his council scheme. But the goal of a wider diffusion of economic power among all functional groups in society is common to both.

I am not certain that Mr. Corey has wholly grappled with the basic problems in suggesting his constitutional economic order. It seems to me that he relies somewhat too heavily upon the efficacy of formal procedures and administrative machinery. The separation of powers in the federal and state governments has not prevented their domination, throughout most of the period since the Civil War, by the larger corporate interests and I am not convinced that any governmental machinery can maintain a fair balance between contending groups in the state. In realistic terms, the problem will always be what group is dominant; and that will in turn determine the ends to which our economic and political activity is directed. Power, despite Bertrand Russell, is not in itself dangerous. The important questions are who wields it and for what purpose. And to answer these questions we must look beyond the governmental bureaucracy to the social pattern of the state.

Having been thus critical, I should hasten to add that I think *The Unfinished Task* one of the important books of the year. In its analyses of our economic crisis, of the collapse of international Marxism, and of the relations between monopoly capitalism and fascism, it adds much to our current social thinking. Moreover, entirely apart from Mr. Corey's precise prescription, his emphasis upon a mixed and decentralized economy is a healthy one at the present time.

Stuart Chase's *The Road We Are Travelling, 1914-1942* is a slim little volume which hardly stands by itself. It is the first in a series of six books which Chase is doing for the Twentieth Century Fund under the general title, "When the War Ends," and it provides little more than an introduction to the series. In his usual easy style, Mr. Chase sketches the impact of the technological revolution on our social institutions. The results he finds to be: increasing interdependence, a growing threat of unemployment, the decline of investment opportunities, the end of the free market, the advance in the means of mechanized warfare, an increase in propaganda, the growing power of central governments, and the trend to autarchy. All of this is familiar enough and anyone who has an elementary understanding of social and economic trends can skip this book and turn to something more solid. *The Road We Are Travelling* is, however, an excellent primer, and it enters the category of books on reconstruction by virtue of a final chapter in which Mr. Chase projects a series of war aims, including full employment, economic security, and world economic stability. These are, of course, the primary goals of all economic reconstruction. How Mr. Chase thinks we can reach them, he will disclose in another instalment.[2]

III

Problems of political reconstruction and of world organization have been discussed in a number of recent books and, although I think the economic rehabilitation of the world more important than its political framework, the question of the form of the new world order remains important. On this score, two schools of thought divide the field and the opposing views are well represented by P. E. Corbett's *Post-War Worlds* and Nicholas Doman's *The Coming Age of World Control*. The one looks to the development of regionalism and to a strengthening of international organization; the other to the development of a supernational governmental structure in which supreme and undisputed authority will be lodged.

After an extensive survey of the literature, Professor Corbett concludes that the League failed for four principal reasons: 1) because it had no means at its direct disposal for the enforcement of decisions; 2) because it had no compulsory jurisdiction in the settlement of disputes; 3) because it made no adequate provision for peaceful change; and 4) because it possessed no adequate machinery of economic cooperation. If these defects were eliminated, he is convinced, an organization like the League could succeed. But the basic problem is the modification of national sovereignty in both the economic and political fields. This cannot be done all at once (indeed, Professor Corbett gives no concrete indication of how it can ever be done), and "we shall have to content ourselves with something far short of universal federation." What Professor Corbett foresees is a mixed system embracing a group of "parallel federations each composed of states already linked closely by geography, economics, and habits of living," and a partial world commonwealth which would admit to membership all political communities deemed worthy by its assembly.

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[2] Other recent books on the economic aspects of reconstruction include: John Torpats' *Economic Basis for World Peace* (John Felsberg, New York, 1941, $3)—a blueprint for international economic organization; and *World Resources and Peace* (University of California Press, 1941, $1)—a rather academic symposium published under the auspices of the Committee on International Relations of the University of California. Economic aspects are also treated in Howard Robinson and others, *Toward International Organization* (Harper and Brothers, 1942, $2)—a symposium of lectures delivered last year at Oberlin College.

To such a view of the future, Nicholas Doman opposes strong objections. The political failure of the League was not due, he believes, to an "unsatisfactory quantitative distribution of sovereignty between the League of Nations and the member states." The impotence of the League is directly attributable to its hybrid structure, to the fact that it was "molded of seminational and semisupernational ingredients." International organizations, Mr. Doman thinks, are bound to fail and the "universal character of the nontotalitarian world order will be a guarantee that the successor of the League is a supernational and not an international structure."

As Doman sees the problem, the defeat of the Axis will present us with five theoretical alternatives in the matter of political organization. We can reconstruct the League of Nations. We can enter into a permanent military alliance for the maintenance of the *status quo*. We can develop continental empires. We can construct a federation having a limited membership. Or we can develop a world state.

The reconstruction of the League, Mr. Doman regards as both undesirable and unlikely. "The victorious powers would hardly let the fruits of victory slip out of their hands by transferring the political balance to a body in which they would be outnumbered." Equally unlikely in a democratic atmosphere is a permanent military alliance for enforcing the *status quo,* although such a scheme is "seemingly practicable from the angle of power politics." The development of regional federations or large continental empires would merely dispose of one set of conflicts by raising new points of contention. "It seems unlikely that there is sufficient room on the face of the earth for sovereign federalized or continental leviathans." Finally, schemes of partial world federation are doomed to failure since they divide the world into two or more hostile camps and, on the basis of a moral world commonwealth like that suggested by Professor Corbett, cause the less advanced or the geographically less favored nations "to atone for the lack of foresight in their ancestors or the unjust cruelty of Mother Nature." We are left, then, with a world federation or a world state as the logical political structure of a universal civilization such as that we have now developed. To be sure, such a world state, possessing supreme power, is "still in the mist which shrouds the future," but nothing less than a democratic universal civilization will suffice.

I am inclined to believe, myself, that in this controversy between universalism and what may be termed partialism, logic is on the side of Mr. Doman. But I am also convinced that the history of the immediate future will favor Professor Corbett. We are certainly moving at the present time in the direction of regional organization and there is little reason to suppose that we shall presently make those profound social and economic changes which are a necessary prelude to any universal order.

The Coming Age of World Control is, however, one of the most profound analyses we have yet had of the problem of world political organization. Whereas Professor Corbett's treatment is essentially legalistic and formal, Doman's approach is historical and vital. Although written in a difficult style, it possesses a sparkle seldom found in works of this sort. *Post-War Worlds* is also a valuable addition to the literature of reconstruction, not least because it comprises one of the best available surveys of recent thinking on international organization. Both books are weak in terms of economic analysis, though Doman's work is less open to criticism on this score than Corbett's.

Professor Corbett recognizes, for example, that the elimination of violent nationalism and the limitation of state sovereignty are fundamental to any international organization. The theory of sovereignty, he says, "must be explicitly and unmistakably reversed," for we are in a transitional stage from the nation state to the world community. At present, that transition is primarily impeded by "vested political interest." But surely this is all too simple. The theory of sovereignty did not possess the mind of man because it was clearly formulated by Bodin or brilliantly expressed by John Austin. It has been effective because it served a purpose, and that purpose was something more than the protection of "vested political interest." Behind vested political interest are to be discovered vested economic interests and neither extreme nationalism nor state sovereignty can be got rid of except in terms of the elimination of those powerful economic interests whose handmaidens they have been. No amount of exhortation will reverse the theory of sovereignty. It will not crumble at our insistence, but only when our national social structures have been modified in such a way that economic interest will no longer be served by it. The failure to recognize that international reconstruction must have its roots in national reconstruction is a basic weakness of *Post-War Worlds* and of most of the recent books on world organization.

IV

In the concluding chapter of *The Lost Peace,* Harold Butler observes that those who undertake reconstruction this time will have two great advantages over their predecessors of the last generation. "They will approach their task with a more exact consciousness of its magnitude and difficulty and with the guidance of the hard experience gleaned from previous failure"; and they will have behind them publics who are more aware of the issues and stakes involved than they were in 1919. In a general way, I think that these observations are correct and that the conditions which they represent give reason to hope that this time we may win both the war and the peace. To those ends, the growing literature on reconstruction is contributing.

Yet I am not at all convinced that we even now understand the magnitude of the task which confronts us. The obstacles in the way of the achievement of a durable peace are formidable. If there is one general criticism that can be made of this whole body of literature, it is that its authors almost universally minimize them, or, having stated them, relapse like Mr. Roussy de Sales into an enervating cynicism. Even where they recognize that the current situation is revolutionary, they devote inadequate attention to the means by which those revolutionary forces can be linked to democratic reconstruction. There is, indeed, almost a total neglect of grand strategy for the peace; there is no consideration of the political tactics by which social change is to be brought about; there is an avoidance of the basic problems of political power as they are related to fundamental social transformation.[3]

All of this is serious; for ideas do not make their way unaided. They are influential only as they are taken up by effective social groups; they triumph only when combined with organization and with social pressure. Those who are realistically interested in reconstruction must, therefore, confront the grand political problems associated with the winning and the exercise of power. If they do not, they will certainly lose the contest by default. For society does not live by ideas alone. It is shaped even more compellingly by the distribution of effective social pressure, and this is especially the case in a revolutionary age. At such a time, the basic question is, "Whose revolution is this to be?" and the fundamental practical problems are those of social politics. It is unfortunate that our writers on reconstruction do not more clearly perceive this fact. For unless we are prepared in terms of power to win the peace, most of their work will have been done in vain.

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[3] Together with David Petegorsky, I have given some attention to these problems as they bear on democratic reconstruction in *Strategy for Democracy* (Longmans, Green and Company, 1942. 342 pp. $3). They are also considered in a general way in Lewis Corey's *The Unfinished Task.*

FREEDOM: SHADOW AND SUBSTANCE

By EILEEN HOLDING

LAST SEPTEMBER, a few months before America entered the war, a book appeared by Dr. Erich Fromm on the problem of freedom for modern man.[1] Freedom, the author argues, can be a mixed blessing for those who shrink from responsibility. In such cases even the wish to be independent will be outweighed by the fear of antagonizing others, and freedom at such a risk will be experienced only as isolation. People, even if they rebel against authority, come to rely upon it; for, while it represses them, it also holds them together and acts as a support.

This last contention has long been put forward by the promoters of a benevolent autocracy as evidence that freedom means disorder and discontent. Fromm's *Escape From Freedom* is in no way concerned with a controversy of this nature; indeed, its first premise is based on the assumption that freedom is the first requisite for any durable society. It does, however, examine the trends in modern society that reveal in one direction an enormous gain in political franchise, and in the other, an increasing dependence on the anonymous censor of so-called public opinion.

About half way through the book the author somewhat abruptly drops his analysis of the social structure from the Middle Ages to the present time and introduces the theme of escape mechanisms. As this chapter holds one of the essential clues to the total argument it will, perhaps, be expedient to discuss it first. It is a study of individual character reactions and deals with the devices of the unconscious for grappling with the fear of segregation.

The existence of unconscious motivations has never been challenged; in fact the bulk of our literature revolves around them, but the theories for which they form the foundation have been fiercely disputed. Freud, for instance, attributes the workings of the subconscious to a series of biologically given drives. According to him a sort of psychological predestination is deflected by the pressure of society that, in its turn, offers a constructive alternative for what would otherwise be a chaos of unbridled instincts. Fromm approaches the subject from a different angle. He suggests that it is the repressive weight of society on normal characteristics that generates the subconscious drives. The variance between these two doctrines is significant. By Freud's interpretation society has a static role, even a salutary one in so far as it checks excess. Fromm, on the other hand, claims that society is in a state of flux; benevolent where it aids the expansion and normal growth of character, destructive where it represses it. Measured on this scale the deviant from any given cultural pattern is not necessarily the neurotic; he may, indeed, manifest the one healthy attitude in a "normal" group of people whose very conformity is of a neurotic character. To quote the author: " . . . the person who is normal in terms of being well adapted is often less healthy than the neurotic in terms of human values. Often he is well adapted only at the expense of having given up his self in order to become more or less the person he is expected to be. All genuine spontaneity and individuality may have been lost."

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[1] *Escape From Freedom*. Farrar and Rinehart, $2.50.

Now the concept underlying this is that people are basically decent and not primarily so antisocial as to need the constant vigilance of society to make them toe the line. On the contrary, man so strongly needs to base his independence on voluntary cooperation with his fellow men that, if genuine comradeship is denied him, he will embrace even the semblance of solidarity rather than face a threatened isolation, unless, of course, he has the self-confidence to reject the spurious. But if he has been harried too far by the undercurrent of social pressure he will arm himself with a certain attitude to meet the situation. This adjustment carried to extremes in the neurotic is present also in the normal person and may tend either to conformity or to authoritarianism. In the case of conformity the struggle for solidarity on the equal footing of mutual independence is given up as a losing battle and solidarity is sought by means of surrender to a stronger force outside oneself. It may be to another individual, or to a group, or to a creed. Authoritarianism, on the other hand, puts up a show of highly developed independence. The tendency to domineer seems to indicate an indifference to the opinion of others, and a confidence in one's ability to mold and master other people's lives. However, as Fromm points out, whatever the means the aim is the same: to gain a foothold by linking oneself to one's kind. To put it in his own words: "No doubt with regard to its practical consequences the wish to be dependent is the reverse of the wish to dominate. Psychologically however, both tendencies are the outcome of one basic need. The sadistic person needs his object just as much as the masochist needs his. Only instead of seeking security by being swallowed, he gains it by swallowing somebody else."

The price that is paid for the dubious gain is the loss of integrity necessitated by incorporating, or being incorporated by, another person. And while the full realization of the extent of the sacrifice may be temporarily smothered, it is there in the background as a perpetual, haunting reminder that peace has not been bought even at this exorbitant cost. It was to this craving that fascism seemed to offer such a gratifying bribe. It united people by enlisting the urge to bully and be bullied in the service of the new order, and it was impossible to feel isolated in a state where privacy had been abolished.

But what bearing does this have on the composition of our own liberal society? Unquestionably there is a tendency to conform that seems to spring more from a fear of being different than from a spontaneous coincidence of opinion. There is no outward compulsion, but the inner compulsion is adequately summed up in the phrase "keeping up with the Joneses." Now the Joneses are our friends and neighbors; as citizens we are on an equal footing. In "keeping up" with them, however, we are bound to regard them with a somewhat hostile eye, for, to establish a fair balance, each side may have to resort to the means of taking the other down a peg. Viewed in this light the bid for equality is hardly conducive to comradeship. More than this, the very standard of the Joneses that we strive to emulate may in fact influence us away from our natural preferences and tastes. If they own their house, we must own ours, if their son goes to college, ours must go to medical school, and so on. And so the struggle aimed toward equality results only in uniformity. An emotional setup of this kind doesn't prove that people are innately suspicious and grasping. Rather it offers some evidence that our mode of life has put such a premium on competitiveness that we have, as it were, to follow our neighbor in order to keep him in his place.

To understand the nature of these modern trends Fromm takes us back to their origins which he dates, in our civilization, from the decline of the mediaeval system.

The Reformation, defying the authority of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, gave sanction to the opening up of that avenue of opportunity known as free enterprise. It won, among other things, the right for men to consult their own conscience and to dispense with the priest as middleman between themselves and God. Conscience, however, weighted with self-interest, is not wholly reliable. The Church, authoritarian though it had been, nevertheless laid down rules of conduct that embodied genuine spiritual values. It restricted the freedom of the people but at the same time afforded them some measure of protection. Every man had a place, however humble, of which he could be reasonably sure, and a status as an immortal soul that saved him from a sense of individual insignificance.

Coincident with the religious reconstruction was the commercial expansion that stirred up the middle classes against the prohibitions that had kept them on a safe, but low, rung of the ladder. Their fight for freedom, however, was only a partial success. They had won freedom *from* one form of outward oppression, but they had not gained freedom *to* institute a system of voluntary cooperation. In principle they were free to establish themselves on their own initiative; in fact, not only were they without the support of even restrictive protection, they were in actual danger of being trampled out of existence by the competitor. Work, therefore, instead of being a normal, moral, and material necessity, became a compulsive aim, and even assumed the guise of a sacred duty. The man who could not make enough money no longer regarded himself as unfortunate, but as downright sinful, and there was no longer any intervention from the church to shield his conscience from the impact of divine wrath.

This psychological instability was further aggravated by the notable change in the rigidity of society. The overthrow of feudalism did not destroy the inequality of classes; it made them fluid instead of fixed. There was an influx of money-makers into the upper ranks of society so that in time the old aristocracy was assimilated by the new plutocracy. This not only increased the moral standing of money, it increased intensely the anxiety of the individual over his ability to make enough. For the majority the chances of betterment were slim. They were still the underdogs, and added to their insecurity was a bitter hostility against those of them who had, often unscrupulously, risen.

The new religion, partly fashioned by this change in condition, offered certain compensations to people who were suffering from the unforeseen shortcomings of an apparent victory. It was a creed of predestination and it offered them, not equality before God, but the individual assurance of being of the Elect, while others were of the Damned. Repentance and appeal to the grace of God were of no avail for those predestined to everlasting fire, and it was only through the acknowledgment of utter human vileness and total submission to God that the Chosen recognized their salvation.

The similarity between the emotional relationship of the sixteenth-century middle classes to their subjective image of God, and the modern fascist masses to their leaders is obvious. In each case, a sense of disillusionment and inferiority is countered by an attempt to gain self-esteem by submergence in a higher power. A vital factor, too, is that in each case this high-priced salvation is not open to everyone; there must be a residue of the "damned" to cater to the sadistic wish to triumph.

Dr. Fromm, although he gives an account of certain historical directions and relates them to the development of individual character, is not dealing essentially with the structure of any particular society. He demonstrates the interdependence between society and the individual and suggests, as I stated earlier, that it is only through an equitable constitution that inner freedom can thrive, and, to complete the circle, that it is only upon the condition of inner freedom that an equitable constitution can function. In conclusion he discusses this problem as it manifests itself in a democracy.

Alongside an increase in civil liberties there has been an increase in the scale of commercial enterprise. This, while it has enhanced the abstract importance of the individual as a worker or voter, has diminished his concrete significance as a human being. The factory worker, for instance, has gained certain rights that place him beyond the interference of his boss, but at the same time, he is cut off from direct contact with him to a degree hitherto unknown. His participation in the business he is engaged in is limited to that particular niche in which he functions automatically, so that he is segregated also from the total of the work of which his activities form a part. Except in rare cases, no great importance attaches to his personal skill. As it is routine efficiency rather than initiative that is demanded, his chances for enlarging his work experience are small, but, on the other hand, he runs the risk of replacement if he falls below standard.

It is not only in industry that automatization has crept in. Modern education also lays stress on uniformity. Now, the right of everybody to be educated is in itself an incalculable gain. However, a great many jobs that call for high school graduation, or even a college degree, are so limited and mechanical that their performance would actually be hampered if undertaken by people who were bent on exercising their judgment and intelligence. Education therefore, intended originally to aid the process of individual thinking, has had to be modified to a universal fact distributor in order not to disrupt the smooth running of the social machine. In politics again, the right of every adult citizen to a say in the government has been legalized. But men, while they have won the right to elect a representative have gained in fact only the debatable advantage of casting a vote in favor of one out of two or three total strangers.

These ills, though not mortal, are the more undermining because they lurk behind an exterior of freedom. To just that degree that our freedom is deceptive it generates a feeling of uneasiness and helplessness, a feeling never more manifest than in the period between the two wars of the present century. Dr. Fromm does not suggest a remedy that can be applied ready-made, but he goes part way toward the solution of the problem by clarifying it and by making its evils transparent. Another indication of the solution is to be seen in the change that has overtaken people since the outbreak of war.

For many years prior to this, people had felt the approaching calamity, yet the more they became aware of it the more they tried to cover that awareness by pinning their faith to the unreliable specialists who purported to be able to avert it. This is not, as has often been claimed, the result of mass stupidity; it is rather the unrecognized acknowledgment of people who feel that they have no real power to make themselves heard. Rather than admit to themselves the gravity of their loss of human dignity they retreated to their own back yards, leaving things to the experts whom they euphemistically termed the "servants of the people." In such a condition one of two things may happen. Either weakness will conquer so that people will throw themselves more wholeheartedly than ever into a welter of false pretenses, or the will to live will assert itself, and demand freedom on a durable basis. The solution is not to be found in the present war against fascism as such, but in what happens to the people fighting it.

The blitz over England was one among many signs pointing in the right direction. It did much more than shatter a sense of self-complacency; it revealed an uprush of vitality and energy in people suddenly welded together by a determination to face a common threat. Peace-time privileges were not much protection against incendiary bombs, nor was political rhetoric. In the urgency of danger people ceased to be well treated puppets and became self-reliant human beings. It would be looking at the situation through rose-colored glasses to suppose that a vitality generated under the stress of war will automatically be carried over to a time of peace. But the core of the whole question is this. It was not primarily danger that galvanized people into life, but the inward assurance that they counted, that they had an individual and responsible place in the community. This revivication sprang from a tragic pretext, but people who have experienced the satisfaction of being an active and necessary part of their nation will not easily relinquish the starting point for a practical and lasting democracy when the pressure of emergency is over.

HOMECOMING

By JESSIE TREICHLER

Cottonwood, Montana, 1909

WE'RE almost to Cottonwood, Ma'am," the conductor said in Cora's ear. "You wanted me to tell you."

Cora Gray nodded. She was too tired after the long trip from Iowa to Montana by day coach with three children even to smile at him. She looked out the window at the flat, sagebrush-studded, coulee-scarred country of eastern Montana, bright and dry beneath the late August sun, and tried to realize that in this land would be their new home.

It was so different from the oak-topped knolls of the country she had known that she could in no way identify herself with it. It was a land of brown and gray and white with no green to relieve its glare. Light-brown tufts of grass pushed up from parched brown earth. Parched brown earth was cut through by coulees of still deeper brown, with bits of mica sparkling on their dry banks. Stretches of dead-white alkali land where nothing grew made the glare from the sun more intense. Greenish-gray sagebrush was everywhere—an ugly weed, thought Cora. Cacti—mean, stunted plants that clung tightly to the unsustaining earth and rocks—were almost as plentiful as the bushes of sage.

Cora turned away from the window to meet the gaze of her oldest child, a quiet, thin-faced boy of twelve with her own gray eyes.

"Joe, we're almost to Cottonwood. You wrap up that lunch box, and pick up the children's books and crayons and put them in that basket. Help Barbie into her coat."

Joe shut his book resignedly and turned to his dark and scowling five-year old sister. "Here we are, Sis. We're going to see Papa in just a few minutes."

Barbie showed no signs of pleasure. "You said there'd be lots of Indians in Montana, and we haven't seen a one yet. You told a big fib, Joe."

Cora leaned over her other son, Jeff, the baby of the family. While Cora patted and shook him into unhappy consciousness, she handed articles of clothing and baggage to Joe to assemble on the seat across the aisle, mentally checked the things they had brought with them, sighed over the things they had left behind, and worried over whether the dishes and bedding sent ahead had arrived.

Cora had thought it was a wild and foolish thing Will Gray was doing when he decided to leave their home and relatives in southeastern Iowa to go to Montana. She had felt a sense of insecurity from that first winter night in 1908 when he came home with a newspaper telling about the thousands of easterners pouring into Montana to prove up on dry land farms.

"It says the great cattle days are over, but there's still a great new land out there, Cora," he had said. "It's got room—lots of room—room fer us. Room fer the kids. Room fer cattle and sheep and wheat. My own belief is that it says right."

She had made her only remonstrance, that a faint one. "You're a carpenter, Will, not a farmer."

"Hell, Cora, farmers need carpenters. All those people—they ain't a-goin' t' live out there long without needin' houses and banks and schools. Then there's this new railroad—the Milwaukee. It'll soon be finished—right across the state. Wherever it touches, towns'll spring up like toadstools. We'll follow it clear across Montana. Maybe clear t' the Pacific ocean. There'll be more carpenter work than a man ever saw before. And maybe I won't be just a carpenter out there. Maybe I'll hire men t' work for me and be the boss. The country's big. The country's free. No tellin' what'll happen if you git in on the ground floor. Why God-dammit, Cora, I see it all just as clear as if it was right here in this room. We gotta go."

When Will swore like that, Cora knew he was in earnest. Besides he was twelve years older than she was, and she always felt presumptuous when she questioned anything he wanted to do. She had had some normal school education and had taught a country school, and he had gone through country school only; yet she felt no superiority because of her better education. Cora believed that an education was only as good as the man who received it, and never questioned Will's decisions because of the grammar in which they were phrased.

So he had told her farewell and had gone out to Montana to follow a railroad across its great length, and, as he predicted, he had found all the work he could do. He had become a contractor instead of a carpenter, and bid on buildings, and bossed their erection. He had just completed a depot, he wrote her; then he had built a saloon; soon he would be working on a bank. He had teamsters and lathers and bricklayers working under him. But he had no capacity for putting aside money, when the building was booming, for the long winter months when the thermometer was at thirty-five below and no work could be done. He had sent Cora large sums during the summer months, and her heart had bloomed; but long winter months had used up the summer's money. And another summer had had to be worked through before he could save this stake which now brought his family to him. All these things Cora turned over in her mind as she buttoned her two-year-old son into clean rompers, combed her daughter's hair, settled the navy blue sailor on her own light brown hair, and lifted bags down from the hat rack and pulled them out from under the seat. The conductor came and helped Joe move them to the door. The train began to slow down. She saw Will's big, slightly stooped figure on the platform, his hat off, the gray strands in his black hair gleaming in the blistering sun. She pressed her quivering lips and lifted Jeff to her.

"Joe, take Barbie's hand, and don't let her fall going down the steps. Barbie, you kiss your father even if he isn't an Indian."

* * *

Cora's fatigue didn't leave her as Will gathered her into his arms; it was too deep for that; but the fear went from her, and was replaced by a deep feeling of peace. At last she was here, with Will; and everything would be all right. Jeff started to whimper, and they both realized for the first time that she was still holding him. Will swung Jeff to his own shoulder, but kept one arm about Cora.

"I'd forgotten how little and pretty you are!" he exclaimed with pleasure.

He turned to the man in overalls lounging beside a team and wagon.

"Jim, you take these here suitcases and things up t' my house, will you? Cora, this is Jim Shaw who does all our draying around these parts. Jim, this is Mrs. Gray."

"I'm mighty pleased t' meet yuh, Mrs. Gray. Bill here's sure had ants in his pants these last few weeks he's bin so scairt he wouldn't git that house ready fer yuh t' move in—" Shaw broke off in a high cackle, rather red in the face and breathless from performing his social duty.

"How do you do," Cora said politely. Then she turned to Will with shining eyes. "Will, you built a house for us!"

Will blushed. "No, not exactly— No. I bought one and fixed it up a little."

"You're jest lucky you come when you did, Mrs. Gray," Shaw said importantly. "I reckon you'd 'a slep' in a tent or been et up with bedbugs in the Comfort Inn. This house you got was vacated jest in time. Mighty important vacatin' too!"

Will interrupted him, friendly but firm. "You'll be wantin' t' take up them barrels of dishes and things in the freight shed, too, Jim. I reckon they'd better go up now. You drop by the job, and I'll pay you what I owe you. Much obliged. Well, so long, Jim."

"So long, Bill. Mighty glad I met yuh, Mrs. Gray."

"Thank you. I'm glad I met you, too." Cora smiled shyly at the red-faced man, wanting to make friends with anyone who called her husband "Bill."

"My, he's friendly, Will. It's nice he could take our things right up that way."

"Yeah, he's all right. But he talks too much."

"What did he mean about the house, Will?"

" 'Twas the only one in town, Cora, and we're lucky to git it. I never would 'a got time t' build one. You know the old sayin' about the shoemaker's children goin' barefoot. Well, that's me all right, right now."

"Well, I don't care what kind of a house it is. It'll be home. He said it was a mighty important vacating—"

"I told you he talks too much. I'll tell you all about it later. We'll go home, and you'll see the house for yourself." He smiled at his wife apologetically. "It'll be all right." Still she couldn't help but wonder about it.

"I'm glad you're here—you 'n the kids. By God, I've missed you! Barbie, get out from under that horse's belly! He ain't your grandfather's old mare!"

Barbie came out from under the horse hurriedly. Cora said with feeling, "I've missed you, too." Then she added practically, "And I'm glad you're going to make Barbie mind. She's too much for me sometimes."

The small procession moved away from the red station up a narrow main street, walking on wooden planks laid down on one side of it. The street seemed almost empty to Cora as they started to walk its short length. She was relieved about this, for in spite of having put on a clean shirtwaist and run a chamois over her freshly washed face, she was conscious that her appearance after three nights on a day coach left much to be desired. But her relief was short-lived, for she soon saw that she was mistaken about the deserted street. Women's faces began to appear at store windows, and men began to call greetings from doorways. The small frame store-buildings lining the street were filled with people.

"The whole town's come down t' see you, Cora," Will said jocularly.

Cora was shocked, but as she thought quickly of the size of the town and the number of people she saw at doors and windows, she realized that what he said must be the truth. Loud cries of "Howdy, Bill!" and "So the Missus finally arrived!" were greeted by Will with equally demonstrative bellows of satisfaction. He bowed and waved to everyone, sometimes almost throwing Jeff into the air in the exuberance of his joy. Everyone seemed to know him, and Cora again got the feeling of great friendliness on the part of the people who greeted him from store fronts on both sides of the street. She felt her face redden with a certain pleasure as well as embarrassment. She was glad these people so evidently liked her husband, but she would also have been glad to have felt a little less as if she were being greeted by a brass band.

They came to a new, small red-brick building at the corner of the first of the two blocks which made up the town's main street. It had a plate glass window in the front of it, like a store. But it also had a green shade pulled down at the window, a swinging door, and gold lettering on the glass which proclaimed that this was "Mike Finley's Bar." A worn hitching rail at one side contrasted with the new brick of the building, as the two ponies hitched to the posts contrasted with a new but slightly battered Model-T Ford.

A tall, lean man with a white Stetson pushed back to show graying hair stood in the doorway. After a day spent staring out of day coach windows at the Montana countryside, Cora was prepared somehow for such a man. His weathered face was brown as the land was brown. But his face was saved from the harshness of the land by the eyes, a deeper brown and soft and sad as a retriever's, that looked out from it.

"Howdy, Bill," the man said. His words made a great impression on Cora, not because they were unusual, but because the sober way in which he said them struck jarringly on the general paean of joy which had greeted them so far.

"Howdy, Mike," Will said cordially. "Cora, I want you to meet Mr. Finley. Mike, Mrs. Gray."

"Pleased to meet you, I'm sure, Mr. Finley," Cora said nervously. She had never seen a saloon before, much less a saloon-keeper, and she wasn't sure just what the proper greeting should be.

"And I'm pleased to meet you, Mrs. Gray," said Mr. Finley, coming from the doorway to the middle of the plank walk. He swept off his Stetson with a serious, almost courtly air and gave her a slow but not unfriendly smile. "You're getting here just in time to see all these fine buildings your husband's putting up. Mine here—we just moved in a few days ago. And the bank down the street—it'll be the same pattern—the same red brick. Cottonwood's going to have the finest main street in the West, bar none, before we get through with it."

His tone indicated that this would be a great misfortune for Cottonwood as well as the West.

"That will be nice, I'm sure." Cora found herself unconsciously speaking in the same tone of hushed sorrow which he had used.

"Oh, Papa, come on!" Barbie had suddenly come back from her confident stalking. She was almost in tears from fatigue and nervousness, and her voice sounded angrier than usual.

"Barbie, be quiet! There's no need to be impatient; we've got all day." Even as she spoke, Cora realized that she was as tired as her daughter and as impatient to be gone from this sad stranger who talked lugubriously to her from in front of a saloon.

"Don't scold the little ones, Mrs. Gray," Mr. Finley said, and Cora couldn't be sure that he wasn't laughing at her. "Sometimes they die when you're least expecting it." He turned to Barbie. "What is your name, little girl?" Again he lifted his upper lip in a sad smile.

Barbie drew herself very erect. "Barbara Dolores Gray. And I'm going on six!"

"Dolores. Dolores— I once knew a girl named Dolores. Hm-m-m. Never mind. Here's a nickel, Dolores—you buy yourself a box of crackerjack to remember Mike Finley by."

"My name isn't really, Dolores, Mr. Finley. That's my middle name. But it was almost Dolores. Mamma named me Barbara for my Aunt Barbie who was dying. After she died I was to be called Dolores. But she didn't die. So now I'm still Barbie."

"Hush, Barbie. Don't mind her, Mr. Finley. She's tired from too much riding on the train. Will, we'll have to get the children home. Goodbye, Mr. Finley."

He bowed deeply once more, and sighed. "I am happy to have made your acquaintance, Mrs. Gray. So long, Bill."

"So long, Mike."

Happy to be on the move once more, Barbie smiled at him angelically. To her mother, she said, "Now may I buy some crackerjack?"

Cora made no reply until she was sure they were well out of earshot. Then she said fiercely, "You just tie that nickel in your handkerchief and save it for your Sunday School! It'll be one piece of whiskey money that's gone to the right place."

Will laughed. "Beer money, Cora, beer money. A nickel wouldn't even get you a smell of a whiskey cork in Mike's place."

Cora had felt only a surprised acceptance of a strange situation when Will had stopped in front of a saloon and introduced her to a saloon-keeper, but now at his casual laughter she found herself feeling both resentful and fearful. She wondered how much of his time in her absence he had spent sitting around the saloon. Vaguely she characterized sitting around a saloon as "carrying on," though, to save her life, she could not have put into more explicit words what she meant by the phrase.

Whatever she might have to say about her fears would have to wait until some other time. Her weariness was beginning to come upon her in recurring waves. Four steps, and a wave would engulf her, weakening her knees, making the small buildings of the street jiggle before her eyes. Another four steps, another wave.

Cora hardly knew how she managed to walk the half-mile which took them to the outskirts of the tiny town. There were no sidewalks, and they trudged down the middle of a straggling road, past small, unpainted houses which she did not see. Sometimes they stumbled over stones or hard clods of dirt. Brief gusts of a high, sweet wind made shifting eddies of dust about them. Fortunately they met no one with whom Will felt it obligatory to exchange more than a "Howdy," or a wave of his hand.

"Here's our house, Cora," she heard Will say, and she opened her smarting lids.

Before them was a small house covered with black tar-paper held in place by strips of lathing. Two little windows, placed rather high, shone in the sunlight. New, unpainted, wooden steps led directly up to a new, unpainted door. Sagebrush grew around the house, cleared away only from the path leading to a small but necessary building about fifty feet to the rear of the house. A fresh pile of stove wood had been dumped almost at the door. It was a lame duck of a house, if there ever was one, but Cora's heart went out to it as she saw weeks of hard labor ahead of her—scrubbing floors, shining windows, putting up curtains, clearing away sagebrush—labor which she hoped would make the house look less as though it had been dumped from a refuse cart. Her fingers itched to begin.

Barbie gave a horrified snort. "Gosh, Papa, do we have to live here! This is just an awful old place!"

"Be quiet, Barbie!" her mother said automatically. "Stop your sniffling and just be thankful we're home." To her husband she said gently, "Will, it's just as nice as it can be."

The Second Day

The room was faint with early morning light. Sleepily Cora looked at the unfamiliar walls covered with dirty, faded, blue building-paper, stained by the rains from many storms. She lay in a brass bed in the corner of the one large room which was to serve as living room, dining room, and bedroom for her and Will. The bed was battered and bent, but it had seemed completely beautiful to Cora the night before. For the first time in her life she had gone to bed before the supper dishes were washed. Now she became more awake as she realized that she would have to wash them before any breakfast could be served to a hungry husband and ravenous children. She stretched and yawned, and noticed with surprise that the fatigue of yesterday was gone. She felt, without being conscious of it, the exciting tang of the air. It was good to be alive, and she didn't need anyone to tell her so; she felt it in her very bones. Tentatively she rubbed a toe against Will's solid leg. He had always been ticklish, and she smiled as he flinched and pulled his leg away. He rolled over, and opened a heavy eye.

"That's a fine way t' wake up a husband after a year's absence," he grumbled happily, throwing an arm about her shoulder.

"Will, you'll just have to shingle that roof, even if the bank doesn't get finished. See where the rain has stained the ceiling."

He laughed softly. "Up to your old tricks! Wake a man up by tickling him so's you can tell him all the things that need to be done. You wouldn't like that sagebrush all pulled up by noon today, would you?"

Cora giggled. "Yes, I would, but I don't suppose I need think about that for a while yet. I'll put Joe to doing that after school."

"Chains around their necks 'fore they're outa short pants." Will's tone carried both amusement and chagrin. "Your Pennsylvania Dutch blood always shows up early in the morning."

Cora rubbed her hand along his arm with unwonted demonstrativeness, and kissed him hesitantly.

"I was too tired yesterday to tell you how glad I am that we got here."

"I knowed you was, Cora. And you knowed I was. That's the way it oughta be. This is an awful dump t' bring you to, but it was all I could git."

Will sounded so much more apologetic to Cora than the situation seemed to warrant that she found her curiosity of the day before revived.

"You said you'd tell me about the house, Will. How'd you happen to get it? Who lived here, anyway? They didn't take very good care of it."

"Well, Cora, I'll tell you—" Will cleared his throat. "I was gonna tell you yesterday. Now don't git up on your high horse—just remember it's the only house in town." Will paused again. "Well, Cora, this used t' be a bad house, and some women who weren't—well, some whores had it till two weeks ago. Then some of the wives around here thought it didn't look so good for Cottonwood t' have a bad house right inside the town, seein' that ever'body's tryin' t' build the town up to be something. So they made their men tell these women they'd have t' clear out. I heard they was a-movin', and come over an' bought the place. That's all there is to it."

Cora lay still, too horrified to make a sound. Here she lay in a house in which, just a short time before, other women had lain for quite a different purpose. She felt suddenly angry at Will, angrier than she had ever been before. Her thoughts were jumbled, and at first she felt chiefly outraged that Will had put her in such an unfair position before their new neighbors. What would people think of her anyway to come into a place like this one? What would her mother think when she wrote to Iowa? Quickly she decided that she wouldn't write her mother this particular fact about their new home. She looked about the room furtively. In spite of herself, she found that it had assumed a new interest. Her glance traveled up and down the ugly, stained walls wonderingly. She had never thought about it much, but she had somehow pictured sin in more seductive surroundings. This homely room with its board floors and creaking windows seemed a test for only those strengthened by the most hardy virtue. She tried to put her thoughts into words.

"It seems funny women like that would live in a place like this."

Will looked at her in amazement. "Well, I'll be damned! I thought you'd have a fit."

She made a wry face at him. "I feel a little like having a fit," she admitted. "But I don't see what can be done about it. The children can't sleep out of doors with winter coming on, and we can't afford to go to a hotel."

He gave a relieved laugh. "I pictured everything, Cora, but I never pictured you'd see it so clear. Cottonwood's so different from every place you ever knowed before that I didn't know how to tell you about it in letters. Everything's different. Mike Finley now. You thought it was funny I'd stop in front of a saloon with you, and talk to him. But he's a respected citizen here. He paid me good money for building that place of his, and he's always been fine to me, and I knowed everybody'd think it pretty funny if I didn't introduce you right away."

"He acted so sad at my being here I thought he was afraid he'd lose some trade."

Will laughed again. "Well, you kin just put that thought outa yer head. A glass of beer and a game a pinochle's about all he ever gets outa me. He always acts sad. It's just his way. But he's a nice fella, Cora. Only different from anybody you knowed back home."

"Has he got a wife?" Some of Cora's fear that she might have to be friends with a saloon-keeper's wife came through into her voice.

"Not—not a wife—"

Cora looked at him. "Oh—that." She half turned away in distaste. "I don't have to be nice to *her,* do I?"

"Good God, no! Mike'd be the last to expect it. You don't have t' be nice to him, fer that matter, Cora. I don't want you t' feel you gotta bootlick people because it's good business. I just like the guy. It ain't got a damned thing t' do with business."

Again Cora giggled. "No, I guess I won't bootlick. I'm not much better than you are at that. You know, it's funny, Will, but I kind of liked him, too. Giving that nickel to Barbie, and all. I know what you mean— How many women lived here, anyway?"

"Five, I guess, but that's hearsay. I didn't visit the house but that one time I come t' buy it, and I just saw two." He laughed hugely. "How'd you think I got any work done with all the drinkin' and gamblin' and runnin' after women you act as if I done?"

"No, that's not it. But, my goodness, five women—in these three little rooms! And at least one of them must have been a kitchen. How do you suppose they managed?" She looked guiltily at the door leading into the room where the children were sleeping. She had wondered why a little house so poorly put together as this one should have connecting doors between its rooms.

Will followed her glance. "I don't know but what it's a good thing them doors is there. Now I can kiss you without having you wiggle away and think the kids are lookin'."

He put his arms around her, and Cora responded with perhaps more passion than she had shown before in her whole married life. Afterwards she wondered whether it was the talk they had been having, and she wondered, too, why this should be the case.

The sun was considerably higher when the sound of snickering laughter came to them from behind the door of the children's room. Cora got out of bed hastily, and went to the door. Joe and Jeff were on their double bed, watching Barbie, who stumbled back and forth with an affected strut across the tumbled bedding on her cot. Over her shoulder she simpered in an engaging and childishly toothless fashion at her chuckling brothers. Around her neck was a long black lace-stocking. Held to the flannel front of her nightgown was a huge bunch of paper violets. On her head, tilted at an abrupt angle, was Cora's sailor hat.

"Where did you get those flowers? And that stocking?" Cora was momentarily puzzled; then, as she thought of the information Will had just given her, swiftly alarmed. She hurried to the door of the small closet which she had not had time to inspect the night before. In the general clean-up which the hotel janitor had given the house before their arrival, he had evidently used the closet as a catch-all. Piled neatly therein were things which Cora knew would immediately delight a small girl—a plaid hair-ribbon, a rhinestone-studded comb, a scrap of a broken mirror, a kewpie-doll pincushion. Kicking at the pile angrily with a bare toe, Cora slammed the closet door shut, and whirled around to her children. They were innocently interested in her behavior, but not alarmed.

Joe held out a postcard to her, still laughing at his sister's antics. "She's trying to look like this, Mom."

Cora took the card as gingerly as if it had been a dead toad. The buxom curves of the beaming maiden on its glossy front made a well-clothed figure "S" across the card. Around her plump neck was a feather boa; fastened to her generous bosom was a huge bunch of violets; tilted at a steep angle on her head was a Merry Widow hat with many willow plumes sweeping from its brim. One ankle peeped daringly from beneath a skirt which she lifted coquettishly. The simper Barbie had assumed in imitation of the smile on the face of the pictured hussy was almost too realistic to be borne by her mother.

"The idea! Take off those things this minute, and come wash your hands! Throw those awful flowers and that rag of a stocking into the coal bucket! And, Joe, you get up out of bed this minute, and get dressed. I want you to get some lye and some Dutch Cleanser and—and—well, I'll ask your father what else you're to get. We'll scrub this house from top to bottom before another day has passed."

* * *

The first breakfast was over in the new home. Emptying into the teakettle the last of the bucket of water which Will had brought in just before bedtime, she turned to him.

"Now, Will, you show me where the well is, and I'll carry my own water after this."

"There ain't no well, Cora. Not in the whole town of Cottonwood. Ever'body buys their water at fifty cents a barrel. I borrowed that pailful from Labrees over there."

Cora looked at him for a full minute, letting the fact sink in. It was so startling that there was no well any place in the whole town that at first she almost laughed at the oddity of it. But as the words seeped fully into her housekeeping and maternal consciousness, she realized that it was no laughing matter. She thought of the children's clothes that needed to be washed, and the tubfuls which she had planned to use in scrubbing the house. She looked at him hard, hoping he was joking. As she saw he was speaking the truth, dismay deepened in her face. She mustn't let Will see the extent of her consternation. Forcing a dismal smile, she held out the bucket to him.

"Well, borrow another pailful for me, will you? Then we'll get three or four barrels of water to start with. How do we do that?"

"The water man comes around three times a week. He's due to come t' this part of town today. Rose Labree said she'd make him come here. But you're gonna be disappointed, Cora; he only lets each family have one barrel at a time—and you only get three barrels a week—it keeps him workin' overtime as it is t' keep the town in water. He hauls it from the river about three miles away."

Cora looked at Will unhappily. He patted her shoulder roughly, half-sympathetic, half-amused.

"My poor little scrubber. You just gotta read a book in place a scrubbin' all the time."

Cora pushed out her chin. "Don't you worry about me. The rest of these people seem to have lived through it. But how they keep clean, I don't know."

When Will came back with a bucket of water, he set it down carefully on a rough table beside the stove. "We gotta remember to return this, Cora. It's about as bad as horse-stealin' not to pay back water in these parts." He laughed and shrugged. "Well, I'm off. I'll eat dinner at the beanery this noon—then you can just git the kids a bite, and won't have to bother about me."

"You'll do no such thing," Cora said briskly. "Think I came all the way out here to have you eating downtown. People'd think you had a fine wife! You can bring home some meat for dinner, and Joe and I can go down this afternoon and lay in a store of things. You can put up some shelves in the kitchen for me, and build me a bread box. I'll make biscuits today; then I'll get some yeast and bake tomorrow."

"Pancakes for breakfast?" Will wanted to know.

"Pancakes for breakfast."

Although barrels of unpacked household goods still stood in the middle of the floor and the house was in complete disorder, Cora already saw in her mind's eye a clean and spotless home where activities ran on schedule: Monday, washing; Tuesday, ironing; Wednesday, baking; Thursday, mending; Friday, cleaning; Saturday, more baking; Sunday, church and a roast for dinner. White pancakes for fall and spring; buckwheat pancakes for winter. She smiled happily at Will.

Turning briskly to Barbie she said, "Barbie, you take Jeff out in the yard. The two of you can start carrying the little chunks of wood around to the back—I'll show you where. Joe can take the big chunks and stack it later. Joe, you can chop down sagebrush; and Barbie and Jeff can pile it at the back, and we'll burn it. We've all got to work."

"The sagebrush'll make a terrible smudge, Cora—" Will began. He broke off abruptly. "Never mind, honey," he said. "When the water man comes, you'll find a new barrel around on the shady side of the house." He picked up Jeff and carried him down the steps. "Yes, sir, my boy, we've all got t' step lively when your mother's around. She'll make great men of us yet." He smiled at Cora to show that there was no malice in his remark.

* * *

In the middle of the morning, Cora heard a team drive up to the door. Barbie shouted from the yard, "The water man's here! The water man's here!"

Joe came to the door and said politely, "Here's the water man, Mom. You'd better come talk to him. Barbie's making an awful racket."

Cora went outside to find a strange contraption resembling a hayrack drawn up to her door by two powerful horses. The vehicle was filled with many barrels covered with wet gunny sacks, held in place by staves.

At the front of it, seated on a kitchen chair which was fastened to the frame, was a small man in neat blue overalls, with an oversize straw hat on his head. Through gold-rimmed spectacles, he peered benignly at her.

"Howdy, Mrs. Gray," he said with great dignity. "I'm the water man. Rose Labree said you needed water, and I come right over."

He climbed down from his chair. "You kin hold the reins," he said to Joe, as though he were conferring a great honor on him.

Joe took them carefully and stood at rigid attention, with the reins clenched tightly between tense fingers. Seeing Barbie's look of disappointment, the water man said to her, "I'll need you to hold the gunny sack off'n the bar'l."

"Our barrel's around here on the shady side of the house." Cora led him around to it.

He looked it over with the eye of a connoisseur. "Good. Good. A good tight bar'l that'll last you fer many a day. But it oughta be sunk in the ground, Mrs. Gray. Yes, it really oughta. It'll stay cooler in summer that way, and be handier t' git at any time. I never could git these other folks that lived here to berry their water, but you git Mr. Gray t' sink this bar'l jist as soon as it gits empty."

"But the children might fall in," Cora objected.

He began deliberately to fill the barrel from one on the wagon, a bucketful at a time. "No, you kiver it with a tub. An' the children mustn't never go near the water bar'l. Not never! It's a sin that oughta be punished by death er worse."

He uttered these words in the most soft and gentle voice imaginable. Barbie dropped the wet gunny sack she was holding and backed slowly away from the barrel, looking at it with horror.

Cora saw he wasn't joking. "Is there no way I can get more than a barrel at a time, Mr. ——?" she asked.

"My name is of no importance, Mrs. Gray," he said rather pompously. "What I bring you is the important thing. I am the water man."

After giving Cora a moment to absorb this thought, he answered her question firmly. "The water man don't know of no way you kin git more'n a bar'l at a time, Mrs. Gray. Everybody does without all he wants so's everybody kin have. It seems awful hard at first, but you'll be glad later, becuz it'd soon run up inta more money 'n you c'd afford. There ain't no family in this town oughta be so spendin' with water they have to pay more'n a dollar 'n a half a week fer it. That's whut three bar'ls come to. Now I know about whut Bill Gray makes; an' he cain't afford t' have me sell you more'n three bar'ls a week, not even if you beg fer it on bended knees."

Cora felt both irritated and apologetic. "I'm not spendthrift with water! I simply need some immediately for a lot of washing and scrubbing I have to do."

He smiled at her soothingly. "You newcomers gotta learn, Mrs. Gray. Now what you do, Mrs. Gray—you make all the kids wash in the same water. Be fair to them. Let the little boy wash first one day, the big boy the next, the little girl the next. That way nobuddy's cheated, and all's equally clean. An' tell 'em not t' drink so much. An' use about a third as much fer cookin' an' dishwashin' as you're used to. Peel your potatoes without no water. When you wash clothes, jist wash 'em outa one tubful and rench 'em outa one more. Then you save your rench water from one week to use for your wash water the next."

He delivered all this in a rapid singsong, as though it was something he had repeated many times. Finished with his task of filling the barrel, he turned back to the wagon.

Cora said, "Just a minute; I'll get your money."

"No, Mrs. Gray. Not fer the first bar'l. It comes easier t' pay fer the second. An' life's tough enough these days even when you git the first bar'l a water free."

He took the reins from Joe and climbed back up on his seat. From this height he smiled down at Cora in a kindly fashion. "Don't let it knock yer props from under yuh, Mrs. Gray. You'll git along better'n you think fer."

He paused, then fixed the children with a mild eye, and said slowly and impressively, "An' don't never, never, never let me hear of you little Grays havin' water fights. When you wanta throw water, you go t' the river. You hear me!"

A cluck to his team, and the makeshift water wagon went lumbering off. Though his seat jiggled furiously beneath him, the little man sat very erect. About a block away he turned around and called out something.

"What?" cried Cora.

"Boil it!" shouted the water man. His voice came back on the wind. "Boil—it!" The wagon creaked off.

"Well, I never!" Cora said with a helpless laugh to Joe. "I think we're in a country of crazy people. But he's right about one thing—you children stay away from that water barrel, or I'll give you good spankings."

"I'll never go near it, Mama—never! He'd kill us all!" Barbie spoke with great intensity, enjoying the quivering fear which sounded in her voice.

"I guess I'd have something to say about that," Cora said. "But just the same—and I mean it—you remember not to go near that barrel."

Cora stood for a moment looking at the barrel. A gust of wind whipped around the corner of the house, and it seemed to her that she could see the film of dust deposited on the water. She got a washtub from the kitchen and put it over the top of the barrel.

Her eyes searched the countryside. A narrow road, with deep ruts, wound across the plain behind their house, disappearing between two small brown hills. No tree was to be seen, but in places the sagebrush grew almost as high as lilac bushes. The air was fresh and heady, drenched with the fragrance of the sage; but to Cora the country was as ugly as anything she had ever seen, and she turned to go inside without reluctance. Out here she could do little, but inside she could do much. Sagebrush could be pulled up from the yard, only to expose an expanse of brown dirt. She looked at the barrel angrily. There could be no question of flowers or grass or trees with water selling at fifty cents a barrel.

As she entered her house, she felt an excitement which was always hers when she came within her own four walls. Inside these four walls, she could control the wild shiftlessness of the West. Inside these walls she could bathe her children and scrub their ears and see that they were clothed in clean garments. Inside these walls she could bake bread and apple pie and fry chicken as she had been taught to do back home in Iowa. She hung some pans on nails sticking out from the kitchen walls, and vowed that Will should make her shelves before the week was out.

* * *

That evening Cora looked about her again, this time with a feeling of great contentment. She had taken the water man's advice, and had used her wash water for scrubbing her floors and wood work; but even so, she thought ruefully, the barrel of water was already more than half gone. The house now had a steamed, soapy smell about it; and depressions in the uneven floor still showed damp spots from the recent scrubbing. The children's clothes were hung on nails in the tiny closet, or were sorted into neat piles on kitchen chairs which Cora had ranged along one side of the wall. White lace curtains, still creased from their packing, covered the shining windows. White cotton bedspreads covered the beds, even Barbie's cot; and Barbie had been cautioned that there was to be no more jumping up and down on it. A huge pile of sagebrush was stacked at one side of the yard, and at least one tiny patch of ground directly at the front of the house was completely cleared.

The mood of close identification of herself with her family was still upon Cora. When the dishes were done, she brought some darning into the circle of light cast by the oil lamp. So sharp was her perception of Will and each of the children that it seemed to her they sat within a charmed circle. Joe was hunched over the table reading a book. Barbie, who was curled up on her father's lap, put her finger on his throat now and then in an attempt to feel the rumble of his voice as he talked to her mother.

"It's time for you to go to bed, Barbie," Cora said, smiling quietly at her daughter.

"Papa used to sing to me before I went to bed," Barbie objected.

"That's right, I did," said Will. "I used to sing to you. And I'm glad t' have the chance t' be singing to you again. What'll it be?"

Barbie wrinkled her forehead in an attempt to remember the songs her father had sung to her before he went to Montana.

Joe said, "Sing that one about the old man who's going up North to freeze to death, Papa. It used to make Barbie cry, but it's pretty; and she's got to grow up some time and quit crying."

Will gathered Barbie more closely to him. She watched his mouth and throat intently as he started to sing.

I'm goin' from the cotton fields,
I'm goin' from the cane,
I'm goin' t' leave the old log hut
That stands down in the lane.

When the sun goes down tonight—
Oh, it makes me sigh—
When the sun goes down tonight,
I'm goin' t' say goodbye.

Will's voice, singing the plaintive, sentimental white man's version of the Negro's thoughts, rose full and rich in the quiet autumn air. A patch of moonlight, brighter than the glow from the oil lamp, shone on the floor. The evening was chilly, and no fire was built. Somewhere in the distance Cora heard with great clearness the hoofs of a plodding horse and the turning wheels of a wagon. She looked about her at these people she loved most of all those on earth, and felt a lonesome peace in accepting as home this strange land in which she found herself. She could almost feel the miles and miles of silent prairie stretching out away from her, and she could hear the wind, rushing through space, with never a treetop to stop its breathless speed. She pulled her rolled-up sleeves down over her cold arms.

Now Dinah she don't want t' go,
She says she's gettin' old,
An' she's afeard she'll freeze t' death,
That country am so cold.

A long, shuddering sob from Barbie interrupted the song. "Oh, Papa, I can't stand it. Truly I can't. It's too sad."

"No, Barbie, you gotta hear it all. You can't just say you can't stand things and not listen when a body wants t' sing a song. You let me finish, and then I'll sing a funny one for you."

Barbie put her hand over her mouth, and cowered down against her father's chest. He stroked her hair gently as he finished the song for Joe, and wiped the tears from his own eyes when he had finished. Then he picked Barbie up in his arms and started waltzing gaily about the floor with her as he began to sing his next song:

Now McManus loaned a dress suit
For the ball the other night.
The coat was much too large for him,
The pants they was too tight—

THE PROFESSOR TALKS BACK

By ROBERT H. LOWIE

It is impossible to quarrel with the general propositions laid down by Mr. Cyrus Eaton in his good-natured fling at the academic guild.[1] Professors cannot as a class afford to live in an ivory tower nowadays. If their thinking is to play its part in society, some of them, at least, must intermittently address a wider audience; and lest they defeat their ends, such utterances must be intelligible. Finally, overspecialization is a thing of evil, and the expert vastly enriches his personality by contact with the general cultural heritage.

It is when Mr. Eaton strays from laudable abstract principles that he comes to grief. Quite legitimately he presents the claims of the "town" against the wearers of the "gown." But he is misled by unfamiliarity with the concrete conditions in which the academic guild works; and he fails to put his finger on the real difficulties of popularization because he naïvely identifies them with the sesquipedalian verbiage paraded by a clique of professorial mountebanks. The facts are rather different.

II

In contrast to the simpler primitive peoples, modern civilization rests on a far-reaching division of labor. This has led to spectacular achievements, but also to one lamentable result—a splitting up into many diverse segments of what ought to be a harmonious whole. In Tierra del Fuego an Ona Indian may have less of a knack at shaping an arrow point than his neighbor, but at a pinch he *can* make his own. Even in the more specialized field of religion, though he may not have a guardian spirit he is saturated with the atmosphere of supernaturalism that makes an Ona medicine man possible. In short, excepting only tasks reserved for women, he can enter understandingly any phase of the social life—economic, industrial, recreational, aesthetic, spiritual.

In our complex Western civilization such versatility has become impossible. In order to be an epitome of his society an individual would have to be a Shakespeare, a Leonardo da Vinci, a Beethoven, an Edison, a master carpenter, a farmer, and a dozen other men rolled into one. The greatest genius can grasp only a small fragment of the total. Naturally the task of understanding should not be made needlessly troublesome by verbal stumbling blocks, but these are trifling obstacles compared to the intricacy of modern life. How many of us understand the principles underlying such objects of daily use as the automobile and the radio? But it is not because the terms "static," "differential," and "muffler" elude our comprehension. It is because the things themselves are extraordinarily hard for any but the mechanically gifted and because few of us have the chance to watch the contrivances in the process of manufacture.

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[1] "The Professor Talks to Himself," *Antioch Review*, II (Spring, 1942), 40-47.

And as with inventions, so with everything else. If we are incapable of thrilling over a symphony orchestra or a Wagnerian music drama, it is not because words like "fugue," "counterpoint," "leitmotif" daunt us, but because the substance of the aesthetic offering is more than we can take in. Ideally this is all wrong, and I join Mr. Eaton in shedding a manly tear over contemporary lopsidedness. However, the alternative is Fuegian homogeneity or modern differentiation. The unity of outlook in an Ona camp is aesthetically far more pleasing than the cleavages in Western civilization, but that is the price we have had to pay for progress.

For this reason the assertion that "no conclusion is of any use until it is put into language the ordinary man can understand" strikes me as preposterous. Is a bridge useless to a driver who knows nothing of the technicalities of stress and strain? Does a patient have to know the chemical constitution of his medicaments? All sorts of things may be of the highest use to the ordinary man—and apart from a narrow specialty we are all ordinary men—without being comprehensible.

III

There is, then, no royal road to universal understanding for us moderns, and Mr. Eaton is wholly wrong in stressing "academic jargon" as the root of the trouble. Indeed, he is doubly wrong. For it is not merely that technical phraseology is the least of a learner's worries: it is that such vocabularies are not at all peculiar to academic bowers. "The universities are impenetrable strongholds of jargon" suggests that they are uniquely purveyors of that commodity. The truth is that in our highly complex society every group has its own lingo—whether it comprises poets, bricklayers, baseball fans, or professors.

Has Mr. Eaton ever listened to a waiter conveying his order to the cook? Has he ever read the sports sheet of his daily newspaper? "Campbell, inserted for Foxx after the latter beat out an infield roller, scored the winning tally on Doerr's long double to centerfield." This is indeed jargon, but not academic jargon. And what of the instructions on a federal income tax blank, devised by businessmen for businessmen? What is "accrual" or "earned income credit" or a "wash sale"?

It is an odd notion of Mr. Eaton's to prescribe Shakespeare and Milton as prophylactics against jargon. To model our style on these great exemplars is very fine, but should we thereby achieve "the age-old every-day language in which the great and true thoughts that live have always been expressed"? I open the *Sonnets* at random:

> The canker-blooms have full as deep a dye
> As the perfumed tincture of the roses. . . .

If Mr. Eaton's intimates converse in such phraseology obeisances and congratulations are their due, but they are not using "simple" or "every-day" language. And what thinks Mr. Eaton of *Lycidas?*

> And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
> That not a blast was from his dungeon stray'd;
> The air was calm, and on the level brine
> Sleek Panopé with all her sisters play'd.

This is "academic jargon" with a vengeance! That, however, does not damn it. Milton was writing for a public steeped in Greek mythology, able to identify the god of winds and a sea nymph under strange labels. "Hippotades" is not a whit worse than "infield roller." Both reasonably assume readers who would understand.

Let us ask next why technical terms have arisen. In general, neither the baseball fan nor the bull-ring *aficionado,* neither the carpenter nor the physician, neither the scientist nor the painter develops distinctive vocabularies for the purpose of bewildering the outsider. The motives are twofold: either they deal so frequently with matters of common experience that it is a great saving of time to summarize a phenomenon by a special designation; or they deal with matters that the laity do not deal with or even cannot possibly know about and denote by a common word. On the one hand, it is cumbersome to say "horizontal beam that runs the length of the roof, resting on principals and supporting common rafters." Who will begrudge a carpenter the word "purlin"? On the other hand, the New Englander who never sees capybaras strolling down Main Street will have to accept an unfamiliar label for an unfamiliar sight in the zoo; and the naturalist who has to draw distinctions a layman can forego requires his binomial "Hydrochoerus capybara" for the beast. Again, most of us need not think of solids in abstract mathematical terms, but a geömeter, in the nature of things, cannot help doing so and evolves his "parallelepipeds" and their kin. Common experiences met with unusual frequency and uncommon experiences peculiar to the investigator require novel terms.

But why cannot the specialist coin simple words, say, like Van Helmont's "gas"? Or, by compounding simple stems into a combination of transparent meaning? Because, unfortunately, the genius of modern English is overwhelmingly hostile to such formations. We may envy the German's ability to speak of an "Einzeller" or a "Säulentropfstein" or a "gleichschenkliges Dreieck"; but who would look with favor upon such experiments as "one-celler" (protozoon), "pillar-dripping-stone" (stalagmite), or "like-thighed triangle" (isosceles)? Until English reverts to the usage of other Teutonic tongues, there is nothing the individual scholar can do about it. His best consolation is that, as explained above, nomenclature is a trivial difficulty compared to the mastery of subject matter.

IV

Nevertheless Mr. Eaton, though in the wrong pew, has groped his way into the right church. Diffusion of the results of research is desirable and that means, on the professor's part, intelligibility. But there are two sides to the problem. The layman must meet the professor halfway. He must realize that popular entertainment is one thing, popularization of scholarship quite another. In my own field nothing is easier than to throw together a motley assortment of amusing facts about the Eskimo, say, in substitution for a comic movie. It is a very different thing to explain wherein lies the unique character of Eskimo adaptation to Arctic conditions, and to suggest a possible origin for his mode of life. Such an exposition evidently makes far greater demands on the audience's intelligence than tickling a dullard's funny bone, but if they do follow they will get a peep into the investigator's workshop and discover what science really means.

The professor, on the other hand, has duties toward the laity that are far more important than the choice of Anglo-Saxon monosyllables in preference to sonorous Johnsonese. It is his business to disseminate *knowledge*—not absolute truth, of course, which he can only strive for, but at all events the closest approximation possible at the present stage of research. This does not necessarily exclude theory, but it does mean that it must be labeled as such. Also it is unfair for the professor to treat his opportunity as a moral holiday on which he may give free rein to his fancy as he would not dare before a group of colleagues able to check his statements. The specialist who indulges in his play instinct before the general public is handing them a stone in place of bread.

As for the form of presentation, there are only two points that count. First, the popularizer must take for granted only a minimum knowledge of his subject matter. There is so much to be known nowadays, and any one who has taught for a while realizes the infinite capacity of the human mind to misunderstand. I recall a freshman who, obviously considering surnames of little moment, credited Isaac Newton with being a famous fisherman, and Charles Darwin with the authorship of *Oliver Twist*. So it will do no harm to explain that, say, the Emperor Frederick II is not identical with Frederick the Great; that the "biogenetic law" has nothing to do with spontaneous generation; and that evolution does not mean the descent of man from living apes. Secondly, the exposition should be such that from the beginning to the end the structure of the argument is transparent: at no point should the reader remain in doubt as to what has been set forth so far, what remains to be discussed. That is the secret of such master popularizers as Thomas H. Huxley; and it is incomparably more important than use or non-use of "academic jargon."

WE NOTE . . .

THE MOON IS DOWN . . . IS UP . . . IS DOWN . . . IS . . .

Although there is much in Stanley Edgar Hyman's article on John Steinbeck in this issue with which we sharply disagree, with one of his conclusions we are in perfect accord—that the heated controversy raging in the press over *The Moon Is Down* has been concerned almost wholly with misleading or extraneous issues. Perhaps fiction published in war time cannot hope to receive a coherent appreciation unless it obviously belongs on the one hand to the school of pure escape or on the other to the school of blood and guts. Perhaps the screaming events of a world war make of the inventions of serious fiction a pale insignificance. However this may be, the reviewing of Steinbeck's short novel entered the silly stage almost on the day of publication and with one or two exceptions has remained there ever since.

Max Gissen's apt phrases, "punch drunk reviewing" and "an excess of uncritical good will" (see his article in this issue) are mildly descriptive of the sort of thing to come from newspaper row; and with the exception of Margaret Marshall, who despite a sound critical approach gave the book little more than a lick and a promise, the liberal press was almost as bad. One gathered from the newspaper boys that here was the book of the century—and from the thinkers that by a stroke of the pen John Steinbeck had lost us the war. To cap this impasse and to pile one confusion upon another, letters began to come to the editors pointedly seeking to re-establish the good character of the denizens of Mr. Steinbeck's "mythical" country; and as a climax too good to be imagined, articles appeared in at least two of the "information" sheets put out in America by representatives of lands now under the Nazi heel heatedly denouncing the Steinbeck opus for traducing the sacred honor of their countrymen. At this point, we believe, criticism ought to turn the page and begin afresh.

If *The Moon Is Down* is not the typically great war story which the critics have been hoping for, surely it cannot help to *lose* the war. If it deals most obviously with an invasion, it can hardly be said that its story is without indications of assistance from abroad. If Mr. Steinbeck's Nazis fit none of the stereotypes we now hate, if it is admitted that there may be something of the stage character about them, one can hardly contend beyond this that they are the central figures of the book, or that they are more in fact than the stooges for the people Mr. Steinbeck is really interested in. As for the title, what does it mean beyond the fact that the night is dark? Let us admit that the novel is essentially a drama, that it is not perfectly contrived, that it does not employ Steinbeck's gifts so well as a longer, fuller form. There yet remains beyond all other considerations the chief theme—the heroism and will to resist of the people of the invaded town. This last is important enough to bear much more elaboration than we can give it here.

The Moon Is Down is Steinbeck's first novel since *The Grapes of Wrath,* and it is hardly strange that the central theme of both is the same. Hundreds of thousands of Americans were awakened to the humanity and the will to democracy of the common man by the impact of *The Grapes,* and other hundreds of thousands were reawakened. Though *The Moon Is Down* does not come with the force of first discovery, its belief in the strength of the common man is patent and should make new converts. The critics may say that Steinbeck's central idea is overlaid with mystical talk about "group men," with an almost religious or metaphysical fervor; they may note that his common man is predominantly rural. But if these overtones do not make for a completely clear-cut ideology, they surely make for a very moving novelist—perhaps the most moving of our time. Is it too much to ask that liberal thinkers who have been thumping for the idea of the common man these many moons accept in Steinbeck a powerful fellow-advocate and cease trying to make neurotic a public already convinced of his humanism by suggesting that he is somehow, wittingly or unwittingly, playing ball with the Axis? For the strength and the will of the common man *is* the chief idea of our time. It is so big and so important that if the little people of *The Moon Is Down* have no validity in real life, then there is small validity in our war. P.B.

POLITICAL EDUCATION FOR THE ARMY

Mrs. Roosevelt has expressed a fear that must be shared by all of us, the fear of the effects of antilabor propaganda among our armed forces. But it is not simply antilabor agitation that is a serious problem; there is a more subtle and therefore more dangerous defeatism and apathy that apparently have been spread throughout our troops. Gallup surveys have all too eloquently testified to a growing antilabor bias in the camps—a strange condition indeed when the majority of soldiers themselves must be from labor families! There is no record, of course, of the general attitude toward the war, but it is by no means obvious that the atrocious morale of the pre-Pearl Harbor selectees has changed completely.

Quite recently, for example, we had occasion to talk with a number of army officers, and we were appalled by quite casual remarks such as: "I guess England is satisfied now. After all, she has always expected every American to do his duty." "You civilians are pretty lucky. I guess we just don't like you." "I'm not mad at anyone in this war. Well, I don't know about the C.I.O. . ." Let's hope these were atypical officers. But when a man has been following the Chicago *Tribune* or the New York *Daily News,* the putting on of a uniform does not automatically change his ideas. That would be too much to expect. But what, in the name of all that's vital, is being done about educating our army?

Where is the all-out plan to teach the meaning of democracy to what should be the greatest democratic army on earth? Why don't our soldiers—not to mention the officers—know what we are fighting for? We have the model of politically conscious armies among our Allies. For Great Britain has now followed the lead of her colonies and of China and Russia, and has inaugurated the ABCA—Army Bureau of Current Affairs. Under civilian leadership, the British army is kept informed not merely about significant news events; it is being encouraged to develop discussion forums on topics of general political interest—"Rebuilding Britain" being one of them. England apparently has not forgotten Cromwell and his Roundhead citizen-soldier who "must know what he fights for, and love what he knows." We have a trained educational personnel and a battery of educational techniques far beyond any of the other United Nations. But does the professional American army have the will to teach truly democratic ways of living? Does it even have the vision?

To be sure, political commisars *à la Russe* are highly unpopular, and it is unnecessary to imitate such a formalistic institution. But political education—totally different from the traditional military courses in "civics"—must ultimately become an integral part of military training; education, moreover, that can be safely entrusted only to a top-flight civilian personnel. Without it, our soldiers will still be wondering whom they are fighting and why. Without it, the armed forces turn into nothing more than a band of mercenaries instead of being—as they surely are—the world's greatest hope of a genuinely democratic future.

G.R.G.

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ADD SOLDIERS' READING

In our last issue under the heading, "What Do You Read, Soldier?" we printed parts of two speeches by Lieutenant Philip Hart and Private Wright Jackson of Camp Sheridan about reading habits in the Army. As quoted, Private Jackson seemed pretty high on the subject, and perhaps we should have made more plain the warning that, speaking briefly as he was before a group of sympathetic librarians about to tackle the Victory Book Campaign, he was perhaps (without imputations against his honesty) as much the promoter as the all-seeing reporter.

From Sergeant Alvin Hunter of Fort Lewis, Washington (since then Candidate Hunter in Medical Field Service School, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania) comes a letter to paint a somewhat different picture. We quote practically in full:

> In your Spring number you report on the literary pursuits of dogfaces (a soldier to another soldier). You quote Pvt. Wright Jackson to the effect that soldiers' reading matter would put a Phi Bete to shame. Now, I am not trying to question the veracity of Pvt. Jackson's views; but I should like to have you and your readers know that not *all* soldiers are devotees of *belles lettres*.
>
> My own experience in soldiers' reading leads me to believe that the proportion of men reading current best sellers is extremely small. In the first place, most soldiers read magazines, not books. The reason is that magazines are easily obtained at any local canteen whereas a soldier must go to the library for a book, and you just don't find a library at the end of every company street. In the second place, the magazines read are not the *Journal of Philosophy, American Scholar,* or *Classical Quarterly*. On the contrary, the most popular magazines—by far the most popular—are the so-called "comics": *Superman, Mandrake the Magician, Mr. America,* and similar epics of the impossible. I have actually seen one soldier pull a knife on another because he wanted to be first to read the last instalment of the *Bat-Man*. Even the newsboys advertise their wares by singing, as they walk through the

barracks, "Read all about it—Superman smashes spy ring." The daily adventures of these gravity-defying men (?) is more important to the soldiers than the daily adventures of their buddies on Bataan, in Australia, in Burma, Alaska, Iceland and Ireland.

These alleged comics, I repeat, are consumed in wholesale lots by soldiers. The next higher rung in the literary ladder is such stock pulps as the various "true" air, love, romance, western, and detective stories. The soldiers devour these in gigantic quantities. Then come the slicks—*Post* and *Collier's* (especially for their cartoons) and *Life*. Some few lads keep posted with recent current affairs by reading *Time, Newsweek*, and *Reader's Digest*. Finally, there are two men in my outfit (including the writer) who have heard of and read the *Nation, Partisan Review, Antioch Review, Saturday Review of Literature*, etc.

As for books—well, it's just too damned far to the library, and besides they'd rather read the "comics" anyway.

I don't mean to convey the idea that the soldiers in my outfit are literary nit-wits; but I did want to correct the notion that Pvt. Jackson seemed to express, the notion that our army is composed of men who have been steeped in the classics.

The significant conclusion to draw from the comments of your two soldier correspondents, I suppose, is this: in the American army, each soldier may follow his own literary tastes; in the German army Hitler's *M.K.* is the "official" reader for morons and master minds alike—all else is on the *Index*.

To Candidate Hunter our thanks and our felicitations.

P.B.

NEGRO CARAVAN

Because there is now a shaking of old shackles, because we are in the midst of a war for "liberty," our first American minority can be heard a little more distinctly than heretofore. For that reason, if for no other, the publication of an anthology by Negro authors, *The Negro Caravan*,[1] is more propitious now than in the past.

To the average white American, the Negro is no enigma. Yet the white's ignorance is abysmal and inherently absurd—all the more so because the two have lived side by side all their lives without there being any communication between them. To the contemptuous or ignorant, this book can be well recommended. So also to bumbling men of good will. Not only is it a revelation of the Negro's versatility. It proves also that the facets to white-Negro relationship are many and strange. And it makes clear, further, if there was ever any doubt of it, that Negro authors can tell their own private stories and plead the case for their race better than any gifted white.

Here are short stories, blues, folktales, biographies, speeches, essays, and selections from novels and plays. Here are poetry and special pleading in court, art and the brutal cry of pain. Here, close by the suavity of Frederick Douglass in the 1840's is to be found the raging melodrama of today's Richard Wright. (You might think that time would have reversed the manners of these two. But no, in many ways the Negro's position in modern civilization seems more desperate than it did a hundred years ago.) The chief artistic value of Wright is his fusion of melodrama with realism and at times even with poetry. But if you don't relish too much the blow in the face that seems to be his genius or that of Langston Hughes, you can amuse yourself with the humor of a Rudolph Fisher or the satire of George Schuyler. There is variety here which if you are white you have never thought possible.

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[1] Edited by Sterling Brown, Arthur Davis and Ulysses Lee. Dryden Press, 1942. 1082 pp., with index. $4.25.

The editing and the accompanying critical introductions are excellent. The Negro Publication Society of America, which fostered this as its second publication, is to be congratulated.

P.B.

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CONTRIBUTORS

Few aspects of the English war effort have more pertinence for Americans than the character and background of the men who took over wartime control of English industries. ERNEST DALE, who handles the subject in this issue, is a young English economist. His "How England Controls Inflation" appeared in the Winter (1941) issue.

LINCOLN R. GIBBS, who considers John Steinbeck as moralist, is professor of English at Antioch College and an editor of *The* ANTIOCH REVIEW. Readers will remember his study of James Russell Lowell in the Spring (1941) issue.

STANLEY EDGAR HYMAN, who evaluates another aspect of John Steinbeck's work, is a book critic whose reviews frequently appear in *The New Republic.* He also writes regularly for *The New Yorker.*

DAVID W. PETEGORSKY, who here evaluates the recent work of Max Lerner, has appeared twice before in the REVIEW. With J. Donald Kingsley he collaborated on *Strategy for Democracy* (Longmans, Green, 1942), and he has recently contributed articles and reviews to *The New Republic, Free World, Science and Society, The Contemporary Jewish Record,* and *Threshold.*

Few writers know more of the specific problems of Eastern Europe and the Near East than ALBERT VITON, whose earlier "Permanent Minorities: a World Problem" appeared in our Winter (1941) issue. Mr. Viton serves at present as Economic Advisor to the Consumer division of the O.P.A. He is working on a book, *The British Empire at War.*

Perhaps there is no more basic job for the postwar world than establishing a sound domestic economy. **John H. G. Pierson**, whose article in this issue offers suggestions on the subject, has taught economics at Yale, served as Associate Director of the Institute for Applied Social Analysis, and authored *Full Employment* (Yale University Press, 1941). At present he is Assistant Chief of the Postwar Division, Bureau of Labor Statistics, but he notes that his article "represents the personal views of the author and does not necessarily reflect the opinions of others in the Bureau of Labor Statistics."

Horace S. Fries is assistant professor of philosophy at the University of Wisconsin. He has published extensively in philosophical and social science periodicals, his emphasis throughout resting on the importance of scientific method in handling social, ethical, and religious problems.

Max Gissen, critic of the book critics, studied law for a time and then taught school. Since 1939, however, he has been earning his living at writing. He is a regular contributor to *The New Republic* and has appeared also in *The Nation*.

Algo D. Henderson recently delivered his "Liberal Education in a Revolutionary World" before the Ohio College Association in his capacity as president of that organization. In a slightly different form the article has been published in the Transactions of the Association. Mr. Henderson is president of Antioch College.

J. Donald Kingsley, chairman of the editorial board of *The* ANTIOCH REVIEW, is especially well qualified to review books on reconstruction. As co-author with David W. Petegorsky, he has written one of the leading books in the field, *Strategy for Democracy*. Mr. Kingsley has just become a contributing editor to *Current History*.

Eileen Holding's interest in Erich Fromm's *Escape from Freedom* is perhaps explained by the fact that she is now working on a "'psychological attitude' survey concerning the external and internal response of the individual to the impact of social and international development." Miss Holding, a young Englishwoman, has written dramatic, literary, and art criticism for such journals as the English

New Statesman and Nation and the American *Nation* and *New Republic.*

JESSIE TREICHLER is a member of the administrative staff of Antioch College. The present selection is part of a novel, *Cora Gray.*

ROBERT H. LOWIE, who writes a witty rejoinder to Cyrus Eaton's "The Professor Talks to Himself" (see the last issue) is one of the outstanding ethnologists in the country. He is the author of more than a dozen books and has been for more than fifteen years professor of anthropology at the University of California.